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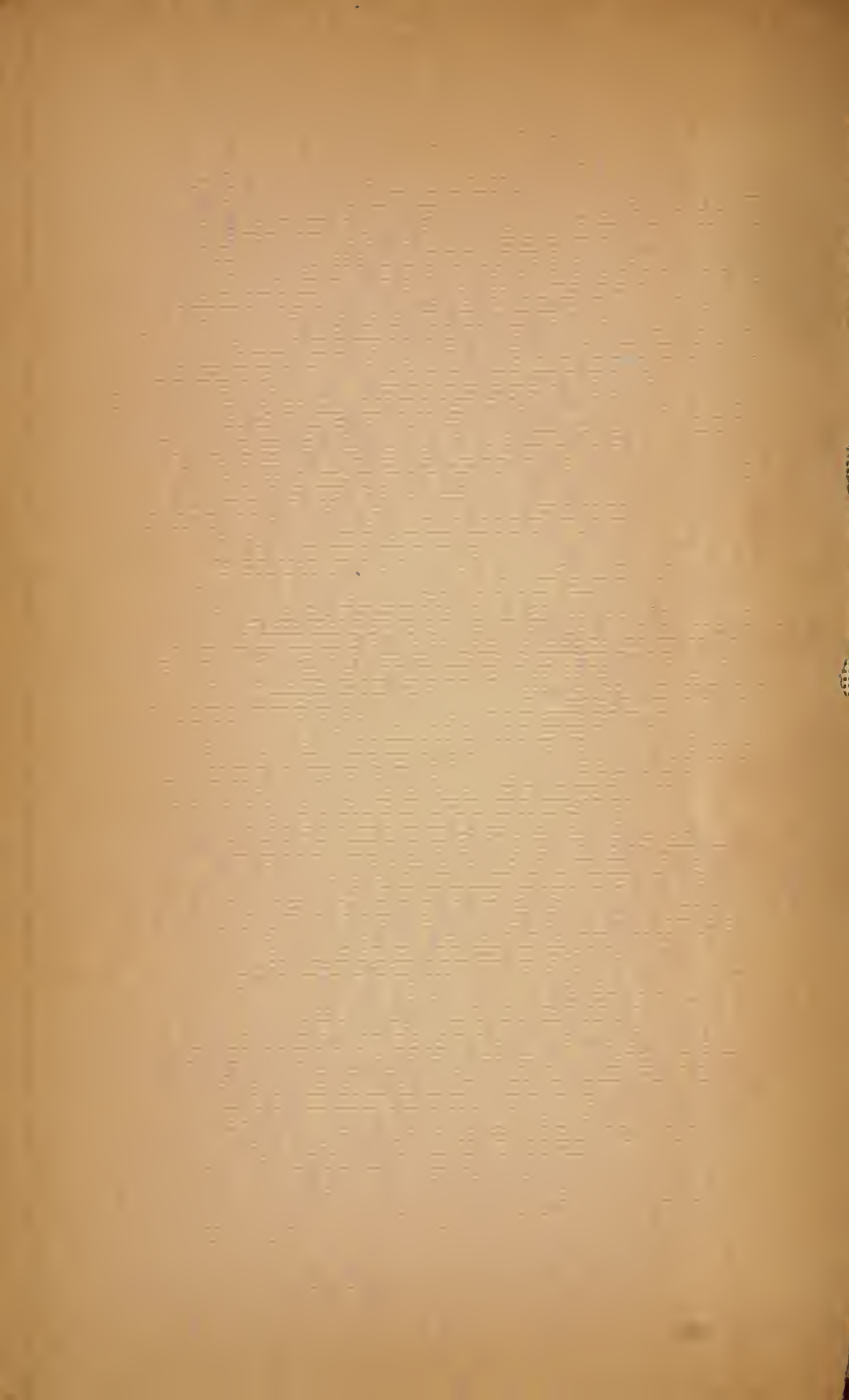
Ecce Orātor

CHRIST THE ORATOR

BY

T. ALEXANDER HYDE

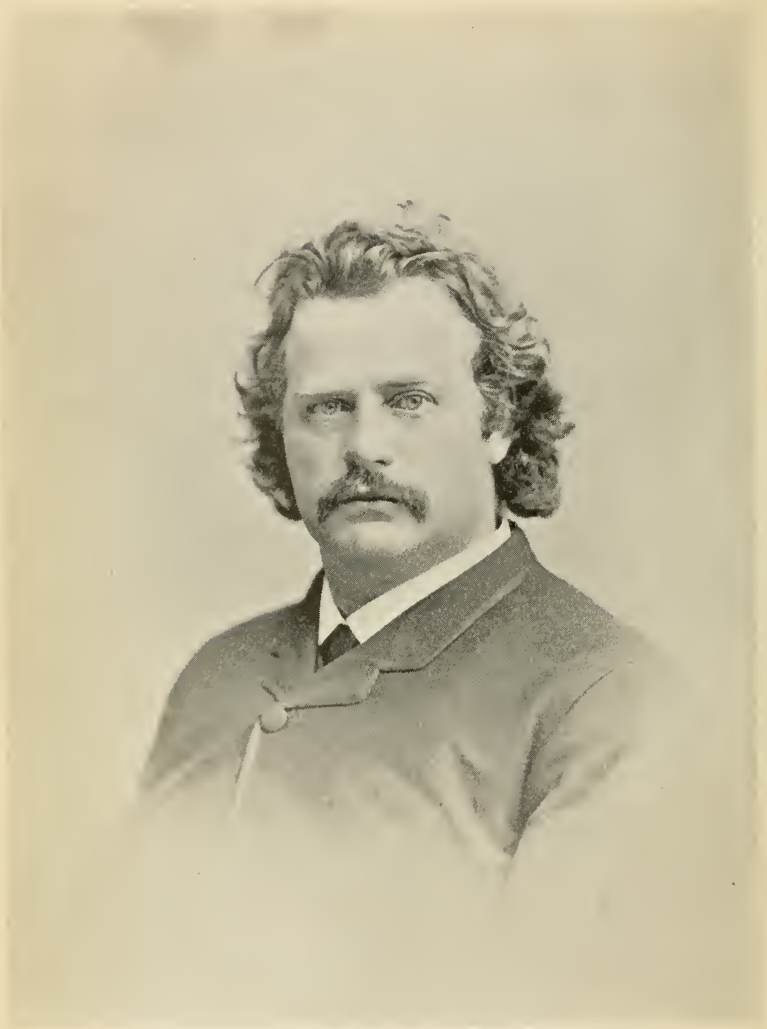




Oct. 31 1906

(Hyde)
ZFH





Yours sincerely

Thomas A. Hayde

Not in S. C.
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ECCE ORĀTOR!

CHRIST THE ORATOR,

OR

NEVER MAN SPAKE LIKE THIS MAN.

By

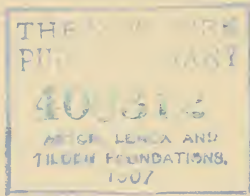
REV. T. ALEXANDER HYDE.

Author of "The Natural System of Elocution and Oratory," "How to Study Character," "The True Basis for Science of Mind," "The Boy Crusoes," "Remedy for Social Evils," "The Early Church," "How to Make the Clergy Better Speakers," "Heroism of Christ," "The Silver Cord," "Phillips Brooks," etc.



BOSTON:
ARENA PUBLISHING COMPANY,
COPLEY SQUARE.

1893.



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Arena Press.

★ Mrs. S. V. V. Huntington

Oct. 13 1906

DEDICATION.

To Her, from whose loving lips
in the dawn of childhood, I first learned the
beauty, power and sweetness
of the English tongue; and who, as my mind
expanded and thirst for knowledge
grew, taught me, in matchless eloquence of
love, all that makes the soul right
and the heart strong, My MOTHER, in lov-
ing gratitude this book is dedicated

BY THE AUTHOR.

*It is always sweet to realize all
sincere tributes to a mother*

NOTE TO THE PREFACE.

During the preparation of this book for publication, the author contributed a short article on the subject of "Christ as an Orator" to the North American Review. The article was very favorably received, and many readers, including ministers and educators, voluntarily addressed the author, care of the Review and personally, writing in high praise of the subject and of its excellent treatment, and expressing an earnest desire that the author would furnish the public with a more extended elucidation of this most important subject in book form. The author therefore gladly avails himself of the present opportunity of returning thanks for their favorable criticism, and it gives him much pleasure to comply with their desire for a more extended treatment. The present volume was in preparation before the essay mentioned above was written, and embraces all the topics so concisely stated in the article, with many others of still greater importance.

September, 1893.

PREFACE.

THIS book is published with the hope of calling attention to a very important but much neglected subject, "Christ as an Orator." Since Christ came to manifest God and typical life to man, He was not only the truth but also the expression or pattern of the truth; hence His expressional is as important as His divine or human nature. This alone ought to commend the study of Christ as an orator, but when it is considered that He not only spread his views by speech, but that He achieved the most wonderful event in history—the organization of oratory as a continuous and abiding force for the development of character,—such a study becomes a necessity.

The millions of churches with their pulpits found in every part of the world are the result of Christ's preaching. The pulpit has had such a vast influence upon human progress, that the world could hardly have reached its present high moral and spiritual enlightenment without its aid. For this work alone Christ should be given the foremost place among those who have organized great philanthropic movements. It can also be shown, since all the events of His life were the result of His preaching, that a history of His life is incomplete without a sketch of His oratorical methods. Nor can His teachings be clearly comprehended unless His expressional characteristics are understood. The records of the life of Jesus are for the most part reports of His sermons and cannot be correctly interpreted unless studied in the light of

i.e. His life

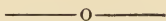
they are
the result
of His
life and
character

His oratorical methods. The aim of this book, therefore, is to present Christ in His most fascinating character as a great orator, which He undoubtedly was, and by unfolding some of the dramatic scenes of His life to impress His truths in the most vivid manner upon the mind of the reader. In thus calling attention to the expressional side of our Lord's work, the author sincerely hopes that all who read may find aid; that the preacher, by learning directly the methods of the World's Greatest Orator, may make his own eloquence more persuasive; and that every one may be enabled to see the real Christ as He lived and moved among men and addressed the vast assemblies of the world, and that by a study of Christ's oratorical style, a clearer and more harmonious interpretation of Scripture may prevail, and thus lead to the union of all those whom erroneous conceptions of the words of Christ now unhappily keep apart. The author has also sought to present the subject in a popular way, since not only preachers and scholars, should be drawn toward this theme, but all classes, learned or unlearned,—every one whose heart beats with hope at the mention of the greatest name in the world,—The Christ.

THOMAS A. HYDE,
15 Sumner Street,
Cambridge, Mass.

MAY, 1893.

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CHAPTER I.

ECCE ORATOR !

IF it were possible to find a mountain somewhere in our universe so lofty that from its summit we could survey the whole earth and observe the movements of its inhabitants, how interestingly sublime would be the prospect! Or if in the progress of scientific invention some aërial car, or celestial globe could be constructed to travel around the surface of our earth, so that we could overlook vast portions of the universe at a glance, how wonderful and fascinating would be the world of life we thus beheld! What would be our thoughts, meditations and expressions of admiration, as the unrevealed wonders of the universe passed before our view! No doubt physical nature would captivate, charm and bewilder the mind, as it unrolled its dazzling views before the unexpected eye. The long vistas of suns and stars and universes of light, the blue expanse of heavens, studded with bright gems or flecked by soft, tinted clouds, the pathless untrodden fields of unknown and unmeasurable worlds would not fail to raise thoughts of bewildering sublimity. And if we directed the eye, thus enchanted by the glittering splendors of mysterious worlds and vast oceans of atmosphere, so that, escaping for a time from the consideration of

what for our speculation can after all only be full of mystery, we look downward at earth, the home of man, our home, where we live and move and have our being, and where, at least, we have some tangible knowledge of things, what would be our thoughts as we thus beheld from our lofty view-point millions of fellow mortals moving to and fro on the earth in their various enterprises? A sense of inquisitive wonder would no doubt stimulate anxiety to know more of our fellow-men, and perhaps to investigate how we could best help them in their life-struggles. What a scene that would be, the life of man revealed as a whole, every occupation, every amusement, every enterprise, every human force, every factor in civilization and material progress standing out clear before our view, like the projecting peaks of some sunken continent! If we could have such a view of life, how marvelous would be the picture; how grand to the imagination; how invigorating to thought and schemes of philanthropy; how instructive to speculation, thus to look upon men in their search for happiness and fame, and to discover the forces that have set in motion this seemingly incoherent and perplexing state, called civilization. As we look upon the earth, we see houses, temples, massive buildings, bridges, railroads, enormous works of engineering skill. Men are proud of these vast achievements; and as their lordly cities arise, their monuments reaching the clouds, they exclaim, "Behold what science, what invention has accomplished! By the power of mechanical skill, we have hewn cities from mountains, and made the air a huge car and the

earth a mighty voice for human communication." It is even so; not half the grandeur of human civilization can be told, for its marvels are no sooner old, than new ones arise to dazzle powers of description. And yet all this vast fabric thus wonderfully raised may be traced to an apparently insignificant force, namely, thought expressed in activity, that is, "Expression."

The mightiest power in the universe is expression. The thought struggles in the brain of man, and his hands and his lips mould it into activity, shape and form. The most wonderful machine ever constructed has its origin in the thought of the human intellect and the motion of the human hand. Thought and action rule the world. We give different names to the forces that have made our civilization, knowledge, power, invention, science, mechanical skill, enterprise, but they may all be classified under one name,—"Expression." The huge blocks of marble that stand in the squares of great cities, carved with memorial letters—Wellington, Napoleon, Nelson, Wallace, Washington—are but the expressions of a sculptor's thought. The steam engine, the gigantic war vessel, encased in steel above and below the wave-beats, the massive Cathedral, glittering in fantastic carving and reverential ornaments of silver and gold, the most stupendous building, erected to commemorate some great triumph in war or peace, are but the expression of some eminent artist's thought.

Everything in the universe, whether of construction or creation, is but the expression of a plan or thought. The lily of the valley, the daisy of the hillside, the hum-

*of what was a concept
of him, doing, creative*

*of God
mechanical*

under

True

of God

ble fern, and the wayside flower are the expressions of vegetable life, since by motion, by struggle, by action they have reached their beauty of petal, stem and flower. Inanimate nature in its million years of struggle, grinding iceberg, thunderous volcanic eruptions and shattering earthquakes has developed into expression. The lowest vegetable forms, the simplest animal creations alike reveal a tendency and a goal of perfection,—the perfection of expression, so that we could say of nature, animate and inanimate, in all her years of suffering glory, she bore her pangs, and clasped her joys, and rose from feebleness to power, rose at the bidding of her master, God—to be a mother of the highest child of the universe, “Expression.”

In a metaphorical sense we can, therefore, say of nature, as she unfolds her creations in their lovely expressive moods, “Behold the Orator,” since her flowers, her delicate plants, her trees, her bare and slender grasses, have but one aim, struggle for but one end—to be beauteous in expression. What were those struggles but the putting forth of life-force in the form of gesticulation, the movements of the plume, the clasping, clinging motion of the roots, the embracing, caressing motions of the stems, the waving, amorous motions of the leaves, analogous to the eloquent gestures of the orator? Can we not say of nature, she has given to man many an eloquent speech? The lily, rose, daffodil, humble violet, what are they? Flowers? Nay more, they are orations speaking of God’s wisdom, of God’s beauty. Thus we find traces

God's

the orator

beauteous & true to speak of God -

of the orator everywhere, and we cannot repress the exclamation when we behold a work of nature or of man, "Behold the Orator!" *inspired of God*

But now let us observe our universe in its higher manifestations of life, from the lofty view-point of our aërial car, and learn what we can of the spiritual forces that help men in their search for fame and power. If we could say of the forces that help men in their material struggles that they were oratorical, can we not also declare that the spiritual forces are oratorical? The instruments, for the spread of knowledge, intellectual or spiritual, are expressional. All knowledge may be reduced to so many actions of the intellect and so many movements of the lips. The expression of thought sways the intellectual and spiritual life of man. The king, emperor, president, statesman, symbolize power and government. Their regalias, their crowns and scepters, are but symbols of expression. They rule and maintain their jurisdiction by expression. The teacher imparts knowledge by words and gestures, and succeeds or fails according to the clearness and impressibility of his expression. *and susceptibility - how to*

It would seem, since nature rises in her glory and power as she reaches the perfection of expression, that God had ordained expression as the chief force in the universe. The most intelligent animals are those which are most expressive. The progress of man has been and will always be on the lines of expression. There is ~~some~~ truth, therefore, in the old expression, "Men spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit,"

*expression
manipulation
god man
development
intellectual
willings*

*inspired
powerful
if not
chief*

may
for if it is possible for a revelation of the spiritual to be made to man, it must come through the channel of expression. It seems, since nature has developed from lower to higher forms of life on planes of expression, that her highest outcome would be a creature in whom the instruments of expression were most perfect. How true this is, if we reflect that progress must be accomplished through expression! The world itself is said to have arisen because of the utterance of the Almighty. God moved upon the face of the deep. With a word He commanded the sun, the moon, and the stars to appear, and all vegetable and animal forms to move in the universe of nothingness. Hence we should not be surprised if the highest influence for education in this universe is expression, since it is such a high spiritual power, and seems to be an attribute of God Himself. To look, therefore, at our world again, we shall see a wonderful confirmation of the great truth that all creation reaches perfection on the lines of expression; for there we discover that the chief instrument of progress used by men is speech. The higher the development, the more frequent the use of expression. We can trace the orator everywhere in the life-struggles of men. Literature, which exerts a powerful influence, is but the record of spoken words. Teaching is the art of communicating knowledge. Language was first oral, and has no permanent signification when divorced from its articulate sound. Men use speech to tell their wants, joys and sorrows. Every form of our complex life requires the use of speech. Hence oratory has always

His
certainly

been a great force in the world; and there will come a condition of civilization, when every material or despotic weapon will be laid aside, and all disputes will be settled by the power of speech.

As an instrument of moral development there can be found no better, since speech is but soul utterance. The orator may be defined as one who seeks to place his soul upon other souls. What he believes, thinks, feels, he would impart to others for their development. And if his soul is highly endowed, his influence upon character must be great. Hence we should expect that if God desired to give a revelation of Himself to men, such a revelation would come through human speech; and if God designed to develop character, He would select human speech as the chief instrument. For see what a power it must be in all phases of spiritual or moral development. It is the channel of communication between all forms of life. By its nature it cannot be solitary or dead: the lips that speak must live and the heart that prompts the tongue must throb with sympathy. The eye kindles and the hand moves with earnest desire to win human souls to happiness; and even in the utterance of words how much soul-quality can appear! The soft accent, the sweet inflection, the enchanting melody of intonation, convey in the language of correspondence ideals of perfection that can only have their realization in the spiritual world. The voice, ear, eye, hand, those beautiful instruments of oratory, when impregnated with true eloquence, suggest in unmistakable language the possibility of divine communication. As men

are in
shimmer

as through them
 speak to each other it is possible God can speak to men.

as
 And so we find in sacred books, that God is described as having a voice that speaks, an eye that sees, an ear that hears, and a hand that uplifts. He holds the world in the hollow of His hand; His ear is attentive to man's feeblest cry; and He guards him with the apple of His eye. He treads man's enemies under His feet, and proclaims judgment with His lips, and thunders marvelously with His voice. We thus see that it is impossible to speak of God as influencing our lives, without attributing to Him attitudes, motions and vocal intonations that are oratorical. How dramatic that scene that represents Adam, after the commission of his first sin, covered with shame and confusion, the dreadful garment of evil, as hearing the voice of God calling to him, "Adam, where art thou?" Or that other scene, the most dreadful the world has at any time witnessed, where Cain stands before God, his hand imbrued in fraternal blood, and the voice of God speaks in thunderous accents, "Cain, where is Abel thy brother? What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground." Not only for judgment God speaks, but to bless and impart truth. To David, Isaiah, Jeremiah and other prophets, He spoke in accents of warning, love and truth. So important did Jehovah regard human speech as an instrument for development of character, that He ordained a line of prophets as orators to preach to His people. All moral movements, all spiritual revelation came through these

prophets, whose orations remain to-day specimens of impassioned eloquence. Thus in every phase of religious development, in every form of revelation, and every movement for the spread of moral principles, we behold the orator.

Now bearing in mind the great truth we have been unfolding, that expression is the supreme force in the natural and spiritual world, let us try to discover what use man makes of expression to-day. As we look again upon the earth from our lofty elevation, or the aërial car that bears us around the world, we discover that, although there are many great forces influencing man's life, none are so potential as the power of expression. All the branches of education appealing to his taste or intellect, attain their crown of glory in proportion as they reach perfection of expression. The artist with his pencil sketching scenes from nature; the sculptor with his chisel carving figures of illustrious warriors in marble; the dramatic writer picturing in words of poetic fire human passion; the painter with his brush, flashing on canvas mountain, lake and gorgeous sunset, alike, reveal that art is most successful when it attains perfect expression. Everywhere we can trace the power of speech. It makes civilization possible; it chains the world with links of sympathy; it makes or unmakes governments; it declares war or peace; it is the supreme force in the universe; and stimulates every work of science, art and religion.

Behold those massive buildings, whose spires piercing the clouds, seems to support heaven's dome, the

most wonderful structures on the earth, because of the grandeur of their civilization. Behold them in their various styles of architecture, church, temple, tabernacle, cathedral, glittering in golden ornaments of beautiful carving and suggestive tracery. For what purpose have they been erected? What grand force do they symbolize? Expression. They are consecrated for one glorious ideal, the worship of God, and the development of man. Forth from their sacred walls issues at stated times, sweet music from the human voice and from most perfect mechanical instruments. Nature, animate and inanimate, worships God through the mighty medium of expression. Within these buildings we find human speech consecrated to the most holy of purposes. Thousands on thousands of pulpits thunder forth human eloquence, and millions on millions of men and women utter speech in the praise of God. Mightier than the glare of a million swords, or the flash of a million guns, in the cause of humanity, is the utterance of these pulpits. Within the walls of these magnificent structures multitudes gather to hear human eloquence in the service of God and man. These buildings with their pulpits symbolize the highest spiritual truth, that revelation from God comes through expression, and men can be developed into perfect character through human speech and action.

What has set this mighty power into operation? What intellect human or divine has organized eloquence as the chief force in the moral and spiritual development of man? Every church cries aloud,

“Behold! The intellect that has organized this force in the service of God and man is both human and divine. Behold the orator for whose appearance all nature has struggled, from dumb, mute inaction, into life, activity, speech and song, that she might have a voice to welcome the prince of speech. Behold! He whom the ages, hoary and gray, with prophecy foretold would speak deliverance to the captive and restoration to the blind, and glad tidings to the poor.”

The Orator of the universe is Jesus Christ. His mission was to reveal God's love through human expression, to appeal to man's moral and spiritual nature to assert its dominion over the animal, and to seek its immortality and endless glory in divine truth. The most wonderful and perplexing person in the history of the human race is Jesus Christ. Men have been divided in regard to His claims and His mission, and have differed in the epithets applied to Him. Struck with His wonderful, perfect, human qualities, some have cried, “Behold the Man!” Others, amazed at His manifestation of supernatural and spiritual power, have exclaimed, “Behold the God!” It may also be said of Christ, when the field of His mighty work as a preacher is surveyed, “Behold the Orator!”

Men have been so intently admiring His man qualities on the one hand, and His God qualities on the other, that they have failed to estimate His character as an oratorical teacher. And yet it is very important that we should regard Christ as an orator. Not only has He consecrated human language

True Oratory is not perfumery, stilted,
or cold calculating (however exquisite)
falsish?

to the highest of all purposes, but He has organized it as a continuous and abiding instrument for the spread of truth, and the uplifting of human character. Some will perhaps say that it is irreverent to speak of Christ as an orator. But if Christ had human characteristics, surely it is not irreverent to study these human elements. Those who regard our Lord as a man only will surely admit that He must have taught by true human methods, and one of the most powerful methods of imparting truth is eloquent speech. If He wrought no miracles, as some say He did not, then He must have drawn the multitudes, that followed Him so often, by His power as a speaker. We do not wish to detract anything from Christ's divine glory, but we are sincere and honest when we declare that, unless Christ is studied as an orator, much of the truth He has taught will not only fail to impress, but can hardly be truly comprehended.

It is exceedingly strange that nothing has been written on the subject of Christ as an orator, when our Lord Himself claims that His mission was to speak to mankind. The prophet Isaiah speaks of Christ's mission in terms which clearly indicate its oratorical nature, "The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of council and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, and shall make Him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and He shall smite the earth with the rod of His MOUTH, and with the breath of His LIPS shall He destroy the wicked."

What higher equipment could be given a speaker

than these gifts, wisdom, understanding, counsel, knowledge; or in what terms could His mission be more clearly indicated? Even the very acts of His life were to be oratorical. He was not to judge the world with the sword, nor with the authority of a divine power, but, "He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips will He slay the wicked." Could there be a more striking description of the mighty power of oratory than these words convey? By no weapon of war, by no exertion of material or supernatural forces was Christ to subdue the world, but by the gentle yet powerful implements of eloquence, the mouth and the lips. *because true*

The people of Israel still scan the heavens, and watch the utmost bounds of the material world, and look with long and anxious gaze to see their Redeemer, the promised Messiah, emerge from the dark region where spirit and matter blend, a warrior, a mighty ruler, who shall gather the scattered people of the living God, and by force of arms return in triumph to the Holy Land, and build again Jerusalem in its glory, but it is needless to say that no such Messiah shall ever come. If we regard Christ as an orator, the Messiah prophesied by Isaiah has appeared, and has smote the earth with the rod of His mouth, and has slain the wicked with the breath of His lips. In another sublime passage Isaiah makes the Messiah declare His function as an orator no less clearly. "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek, He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to" *true*

proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." This passage describes the Messiah as a preacher. Thus we find that the Christ of the prophets was to achieve His mission by the instrumentality of human speech. *very*

largely - so largely that we could not, could not separate the glorious divine manifestations, and instructions - Go teach all nations - Preach the Gospel to every creature!



CHAPTER II.

FULFILMENT OF PROPHECY.

MANY years ago a most remarkable thing happened in the city of Nazareth; a young man about thirty years of age, upon the Sabbath day, entered the Synagogue, and stood up to read the roll of the prophets. A shudder of expectancy ran through the men and women assembled in that house of God, as the young man unrolled the Sacred Scriptures, for a report had reached them that this young man had performed wonderful works in the neighboring cities. One report said that He was a mighty teacher and expounder of the law and the prophets; another, that He wrought miracles. As the young man read, He uttered with ringing voice and marked emphasis, the glowing description of the Messiah from Isaiah: "God has anointed me to preach the Gospel." Then sitting down while all eyes were directed toward Him, without declaring in prosaic words, as was the custom of the Rabbi, what the passage might mean, He remained silent for a few minutes, and then solemnly said, "This day is the Scripture fulfilled in your ears." That was exceedingly unlike their teachers. With look, gesture and voice He draws attention to Himself as the fulfilment of prophecy. That young

man was Jesus, and in this manner He proclaimed His mission as a sacred orator.

Whatever conception we may have of our Lord's mission, He Himself regarded His work as a commission to preach. His power to heal or to work miracles He regarded as far inferior to His mission to preach. Hence we find Him on many occasions refusing to heal or work miracles lest the people should look upon Him as a physician or Thaumaturge. "Unless ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe."

These signs and wonders were to disappear, and preaching alone should remain. He was therefore anxious that the people should learn, as early as possible, that the knowledge of His Kingdom would be spread by human eloquence, and not to rely, as was their custom, on works of healing and miracles. He came to organize a mighty force, the development of soul qualities, to institute a perpetual relationship between the world and God, the force of expression and the relationship of human speech inspired by divine spirit. We have many proofs in the life of Jesus that He regarded preaching as the chief business of His life. In no other way can we understand some of His public acts. For instance, it is related in the first chapter of St. Mark's Gospel that a great crowd came to Him while He was preaching, and many were healed. To avoid this multitude, who evidently came simply to see Him work miracles, He fled into the desert. But the people having learned whither He had gone followed Him, and some of His disciples, being pressed by the multitude, said,

“Master, the crowd of yesterday has followed Thee, even into the desert. Come forth and meet them. Behold, all men seek for Thee.” But Jesus did not desire to see this multitude again. Perhaps His experience of yesterday had plainly taught Him that they were seekers after miracles rather than the truth. At any rate, He declares that His mission is to preach, not to heal. “Let us go into the next towns,” he says, “that I may preach there also, for therefore came I forth.” The words, “for therefore came I forth,” are difficult to understand unless we interpret them as referring to His mission to preach. It is as if he said, “I have no time to lose performing miracles, nor even to speak to the same multitude twice. I must hasten to speak to as many as possible.”

In every act of His life Christ never lost sight of His mission as an orator. Toward the close of His eventful career, when He was brought before Pilate, and accused of having asserted that He was a king, He boldly declared that He was a king, but that His kingdom was not of this world—for if it were His servants would fight for his deliverance—yet I am a king, “to this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness of the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice.” That is, Christ is a king of a kingdom whose dominion is truth and whose means of propagation is human speech. “Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice:” that is, I am a preacher king. My mission is to establish a kingdom within whose borders the truth of God shall be taught to man by

my voice, and the voices of those who come after me.

If there should appear to some a tinge of irreverence in speaking of Jesus as an orator, it is because such do not clearly comprehend the high spiritual signification of the word "orator." They may have formed a very imperfect, if not a contemptible opinion of the word by regarding as oratory the spouting of the hustings, the vain babblings of political caucuses, the meretricious ornaments of rhetoric, the fantastic tricks of artificial elocution, or the blatant sophistries of worldly wisdom. But eloquence is heaven-born; it is a divine spiritual force. It is an outpouring of the soul's highest aspirations, that other souls may receive and be exalted by them. True eloquence is wisdom, thought, emotion, reason, every exalted attribute of man burning with the steady flame of persuasive fire, and in its onward sweep illuminating the darkness of despair, of ignorance and death with its sympathetic blaze. It is no conjuring trick of gesture, nor collocation of words, but heart expressing itself unto heart in truth and sincerity; or, as the Scripture saith, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Oratory being so divine, we can reverentially speak of the Saviour of men as an orator.

We have seen that nature, pure and fresh from the hand of her Maker, has struggled for perfect speech. The progress of nature has not been a dumb show during all the long dark ages; it has been a grand procession of activity and outbursting song, growing more and more melodious as the ages roll, until every

part of her vast kingdom of creation has formed a tongue and developed a voice, and every child that moves upon her bosom has grown mighty in speech and gesture. And as she beholds the result of her unconscious work, beholds the life, activity and vocal utterance that has sprung by slow stages of development from her primal, cheerless, dark and voiceless womb, she shudders with admiration and exclaims "All hail the Prince of Peace!" "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork." "One day telleth another, and one night certifieth another." It is even so. When the Son of God came to visit men the whole heavens did voice His praise. What more divine instrument could be found to announce the deliverance of mankind? No trumpet blew, no drum beat, no blare of clarion loud disturbed the deep serene on Christ's natal day. No sudden flash of sword, no trembling, glittering spear, no roaring blazing gun proclaimed the approach of the incarnate Son of God. Only the heavens were opened, and the angels announced in human speech, so that even poor, ignorant shepherds heard and understood, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace good-will toward men." That was the first and principal text of Christ, the orator. On that theme He delivered many a sermon of comfort and strength.

The disciples of Christ were not slow to recognize His mission as a sacred orator, nor did they fail to see the close relation speech or expression bears to the divine. It is St. John, the beloved disciple, who car

find no stronger or more appropriate epithet to apply to Christ than Logos, which means, expression. "In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God." Now Logos is here an attribute of Christ, that is, something essential to the nature of God. Logos does not signify the written, but the spoken word, speech, utterance, wisdom, eloquence, reason. It embraces all that is understood by the word "oratory:" Spoken wisdom, reason that manifests itself in speech, that maketh known. Not only thought, but the expression of thought; what a wonderful declaration is this. We can literally translate this passage, "In the beginning was 'Eloquence,' and 'Eloquence' was with God and 'Eloquence' was God." That is, eloquence or expression is a divine attribute. It is the nature of God to speak. God is utterance. The reason for the incarnation was that God might be expressed in the language of men. Jesus is divine expression, the Eloquent One that was with God and was God, the Orator that burns with divine and human speech, and renders God intelligible to men. After this beautiful declaration of the most philosophical and accurate of all the apostles, shall we be accused of irreverence if we say of Christ, "Behold the orator?"

The men who lived in our Lord's day recognized Him as an orator. Notwithstanding that He worked miracles, healed disease, some were most attracted by His speech. "Blessed is the womb that bare Thee and the paps that gave Thee suck," is the utterance of a woman while listening to one of His eloquent sermons. His manner of expressing truth was so strik-

ing that many were astonished, for "He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." Nicodemus and the band of scribes and Pharisees which the Sanhedrin had sent to entrap Jesus, and take Him prisoner, returned without accomplishing their purpose, and gave as a reason why they were unable to apprehend Him; not that He worked miracles, but something more impressive still; more awe-inspiring; something that made them cower and hide behind the pillars of the porticos,—the fire of His divine eloquence. For they said, and deemed it a sufficient reason why Christ stood untouched by them, "Never man spake like this man!" We thus see that not only did Christ recognize His mission as that of a sacred orator, but His disciples and the multitudes whom He addressed were impressed with His powers of speech as much as by the grandeur of His truths or His gifts of healing.

As an orator we must study Christ if we hope to ascertain the purpose and meaning of His work. As an orator He imparted the truth which God gave Him. We have no books written in His own hand. So far as we know He never committed a single truth to writing. That Jesus could write we learn from the narrative that describes the woman taken in adultery and brought before Him for condemnation, for it declares that He stooped down and with His finger wrote on the ground. But no written word of our Lord remains. He spoke extempore and we have not even an outline of His discourses written by Himself. The outlines which we have are written by His apostles, and the words are supposed to be those He spoke.

*without looking at this I do
not expect much of this chapter
we will see!*

CHAPTER III.

THE STUDY OF CHRIST'S ORATORICAL STYLE NECESSARY TO
A CORRECT INTERPRETATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

NOW as oral speech differs in many ways from written speech, the laws of interpretation for each also differ. The records of the life and sayings of Jesus, given by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John cannot be properly understood unless we study carefully the characteristics of Christ's oratorical style. The gestures, expression of the eye, and vocal tone cannot be conveyed by the written word. Oftentimes an orator by a single glance, or by a posture of the body, or by a wave of the hand, or by a peculiar stress upon the words conveys a different meaning than the words themselves. Besides oratorical expression, though clear at the moment of utterance, is often very difficult to understand after the circumstance or occasion of its delivery has passed away. Then again it is characteristic of spoken speech to be elliptical, or to abound in figures of rhetoric, which elocution alone can render intelligible. It is the nature also of oratorical speech to indulge in exaggeration and language born of a heated imagination, which, although more impressive and more readily understood by those who hear the discourse delivered, have to be carefully weighed, pruned and freed from overstatement before

the true meaning dawns upon the reader. That the Scriptures are difficult of interpretation may be easily proven by examining the doctrines of the many sects of Christians. Much of the misunderstanding in regard to what Christ taught arises from the failure to study the oratorical characteristics of Christ's sermons. Some of the doctrines cherished by religious sects are built upon the tottering basis of an ellipse or rhetorical figure. Much of what Jesus said in the burning words of imagination or emotion is interpreted literally.

So in studying the sermons of Jesus, we must bear in mind the difference between accurate philosophical statement and oratorical utterance. The importance of studying Christ as an orator will appear when we consider that many learned commentators of the Scriptures are unable to explain certain passages, and wrongly interpret others, because they have not made a careful study of the oratorical figures of speech which Christ employs. How much unnecessary explanation and fruitless supposition have commentators bestowed on such passages, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." All kinds of supposition have been made by commentators about "low gates" and "small doors" at Jerusalem through which camels entered with difficulty. It is simply an oratorical expression for the performance of some very hard task, like our proverb, "You might as well look for a needle in a hay-stack." What person would seriously cut off his hand or pluck out his eye, if they

were occasions of offence, and yet if Christ spoke not after the manner of an orator, He counceiled His disciples to do such a horrible thing. "Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off and cast them from thee. And if thine eye offend thee pluck it out." In another passage He refuses to accept disciples, unless they hate their father and mother and even their own life. Jesus, the most sympathetic of men, cannot surely mean to teach hatred of parents; He must be speaking in strong oratorical language. It is an impressive way of saying that no love-idol or pleasure should stand in the way of serving God. Another saying of Christ hard to reconcile with His merciful spirit is found in Matthew XVIII., 6, "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the uttermost depths of the sea." For the simple offence of displeasing a child such vengeance would seem to be entirely unjust and even inhuman.

Unless we regard Jesus as making use of oratorical expressions, we will find His teachings full of contradictions. At one time He declares that He has come to seek and to save that which is lost, and illustrates by parable the tender mercy of God. At another time He pictures God as a punisher and avenger, and for seemingly slight offences men will have to suffer the punishment of hell. What a different spirit is displayed in the two parables "Lazarus and the Rich Man" and "The Prodigal and his Father." Mark the awful torture which Dives undergoes, not a drop of

water to quench his thirst, nor even the privilege to send a messenger to warn his brothers that they may not come into the same awful suffering. Surely the heartrending appeal and kindly spirit expressed in the request of Dives to save others should commend itself to God! On the contrary the parable, in strong imagery, makes God declare that one preaching is enough, one dispensation is sufficient, "They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them." How different the spirit of the parable, "The Prodigal's Return." His merciful father longs for him afar off, and even meets him on the threshold of his house, clasps him to his bosom, makes the house joyful with festivity, kills the fatted calf and restores him without a harsh word to all his rights as a son. We cannot reconcile the diverse teaching of these parables in any other way than that they are oratorical presentations of two sides of God's nature, the stern and the merciful, justice and love. In order that these attributes of God may leave an impression on the mind and heart of man never to be forgotten, the most vivid imagery and the most oratorical description is employed.

It is certainly true that if we find no solution of the contradictions apparent in the sayings of our Lord, we will never be able to reconcile the warring sects of Christ's kingdom. For literally He has laid the foundation for the diverse doctrines of the Christian sects. Mark how the Quakers derive their manner and method of Christian life from a literal interpretation of such forcible oratorical sayings of Jesus as, "If an enemy smite you on the one cheek, turn the other

also." The Universalist, feeding on the merciful, tender, loving sayings of Christ, can discover no hell only a blissful Heaven. While the Calvinist, with logical acumen, discovers that there is not only a hell, but that most men are born for the purpose of populating it, and that God glories in the cries of misery that forever ascend, day and night, from predestinated wretches, as they writhe in baleful lakes of fire. Even the ordinary utterances of Jesus are full of contradictions, if we do not regard Him as an orator. He told His disciples that His mission was one of peace, that His kingdom was a merciful one; then He declares that He has not come to send peace but a sword. He tells them that they need fear nothing, for not a hair of their head shall suffer harm; then again He warns them that they shall meet with opposition, that some shall be cast into prison, and some die a horrible death. How can these utterances be reconciled unless we regard Jesus as speaking in the heated language of an orator, who presents one side of truth most vividly at one time and the opposite side at another. There are always two sides to truth, and most imperfect is the teacher who cannot express these diverse aspects. It is true that God is love, but He cannot manifest love unless He is just. It is true that Christ's mission is one of peace, but sometimes the only way to secure peace is to fight. It is true that to be a Christian is to obtain the protection of God, so that not even a hair of the head shall suffer, yet it is also true that, when we suffer most we have lost the least, and have the most from God.

calmly, honestly and
be charitable!

To such an extent does Christ teach by oratorical contrast that many of His sayings are paradoxical, and yet if we remember the law of oratorical correspondence we can always have a key to unlock the meaning of such passages. How can we more clearly explain the paradoxical saying of our Master, "He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life shall find it," than by showing that it is a great truth expressed in the oratorical language of correspondence. There is a life the loss of which gains a higher life. The animal life must be lost in the spiritual. And as the spiritual life is the eternal life, therefore the loss of the mortal life is no loss but a decided gain.

Much diversity of opinion exists in regard to what Christ taught in every department of moral, social, and political life. Many novels and philosophic essays have been published in our age, which build up monstrous systems from a literal interpretation of the oratorical sayings of Jesus. The old Puritan simply took the strong phrases of our Lord, in their extreme literal sense, and some modern Puritans go even farther. From a literal interpretation of our Lord's idealistic language in Matthew V., 28, a false social system is advocated, marriage is designated as criminal, and celibacy enjoined as the highest virtue. Many socialistic teachings are founded on narrow, literal interpretation of the antithetical and figurative language of Jesus. It is amazing how unimaginative some men are, and how they stumble in the interpretation of an oratorical expression. What shall we say of the awful confusion some scholars have made in regard to very

plain teachings of Jesus. Some assert that His system is full of imperfections and contradictions. Some infer from His bold rhetorical language that He was disrespectful to law and order and to the rulers of His nation, and did much to excite the tumultuous passions of the people, since He not only called the leaders of the social circles of His day "hypocrites" and other objectionable names, which of course they did not like, but also held them up to the ridicule of mobs, by many a sarcastic phrase. Others take just the opposite view, and declare that He was too servile, and taught the people to reverence corrupt churches, and effete governments by His injunctions to the people to obey the Pharisees, because they were the representatives of Moses and the prophets.

Some, failing to see the oratorical expression of such sayings as, "take no thought for to-morrow, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed," declare that Jesus taught lazy, thriftless, indolent habits of life; and that it was better to be a beggar, full of pious prayers and stupid acts, than to work and follow honest occupations of industry; and point with amazing confirmation to every monastery, nunnery, and to the many begging orders that have been recognized by the church, as evidence that they are right in their interpretations of the sayings of Jesus. Others again, disgusted with the false interpretations of the teachings of Christ, as shown in many organizations that bear His name, hastily conclude that Christ was a very obscure teacher, taught very objectionable methods of life and gave narrow

show one more perfect!

instruction, and triumphantly declare that His name and worship are passing and shall pass into the vast cemeteries of forgotten ages; and that a moral and religious system infinitely more perfect, harmonious, practical and beautiful shall take the proud place He has so long held in the civilization of the world.

Now it is evident from a careful and faithful study of the sayings of Jesus that all this confusion and contradiction arise from false interpretation of what He taught. The oratorical style of the Master is simple, and, if His sayings are interpreted according to the laws of eloquent expression, there is no difficulty in ascertaining His meaning. But as long as men continue to neglect the study of this side of His mission, and stumble at a figure of speech, contrast, or hyperbole, the confusion and babel will go on. There are men so constituted that they have no perception for anything that lies beyond the reach of bodily senses; to such poetry is a riddle and oratory an obscure puzzle. That is their misfortune, and it is a pity that half-endowed men should be in positions of influence, where they can advance their crudities to the injury of others. Many of the obscure sayings of Jesus can be explained by other laws of oratory. We should remember that written words have not the tone or gesture that make clear the meaning of spoken speech. Much of the obscurity felt in the interpretation of certain passages would vanish, if we could give the proper inflection or stress on the words. Where the words are capable of several meanings, there is no doubt but our Lord made His meaning clear by His

voice or hand. We must also bear in mind that we have not all that Christ spoke, but only the outlines of His sermons, with many of His most striking sayings. John says that he cannot narrate all that his Master said and did, because all the books in the world could not contain them. Of course we must regard this expression of the apostle as oratorical. Yet Christ must have said and accomplished far more in His term of ministry, brief though it was, than what we find narrated in the Gospels. We can read one of the Gospels in an hour or so. There is not enough material, in the four Gospels, if Jesus delivered them in their present brief phraseology, to occupy many weeks' preaching. Jesus preached publicly for the space of three years, and constantly almost every day. What has become of all the sayings He uttered during that time? The natural inference is that in the Gospel narrative we have only His most striking sermons and sayings.

The arrangement of the Gospels shows clearly that no effort is made to report any one of His discourses at length, or in the order of their delivery. Only one sermon of our Lord, the Sermon on the Mount, is reported with any approach to fulness, and the phraseology of that is so condensed that it seems hardly reasonable that it was delivered in the way Matthew reports it. Certainly a modern audience would not be able to grasp its meaning, or carry away its truths by one delivery. In the reports of Christ's sermons by the Evangelists, we are struck by the absence of what in oratorical terms is called

“filling in.” There is an absence of sequence or arrangement; many of the sayings are as appropriate in one place as in another. There is evidence also that irrelevant transitions are made from one subject to another, not by Jesus, but such as might occur if the reporter failed to remember the various steps of the argument.

It should also be borne in mind that our Lord delivered His speeches subject to interruption by friends and foes alike. It was not uncommon for some of the apostles to ask Him a question in the midst of His discourse, and Jesus would stop to reply, and this question would suggest another train of thought. His opponents also would lie in wait for Him, and ask questions for the purpose of putting Him to silence. So that many of His speeches have breaks in their delivery, by having to answer these assaults or to administer a stern rebuke, by referring to something in the religion or life of His enemies, and such outbursts, although perfectly natural, and in keeping with the occasion, tend to break the unity of His sermons. His discourses were also delivered in the midst of a busy life. He was often called upon to heal and to preach at the same time; hence the Evangelists recorded His acts of healing in the same connection with His discourses. And though this is a sure indication of the truth of the narrative, it often leads to obscurity in the discourses, for the connection is apt to be forgotten, and a very brief statement of a full speech is the consequence. We thus see the necessity of studying all our Saviour's acts in the light of His mission as a preacher.

Some knowledge of the oratorical expressions, found in the sermons of our Saviour, is necessary to clear exegesis of many passages of Scripture. There is a closer connection between the form and spirit of our Lord's discourses than exists in the speeches of other orators, and it is hard to separate the truth from the form of expression. Why should our Lord have chosen such striking ways of putting truth? Figures of speech, illustrations, and parables are as thick in His sermons, as stars in the Milky Way. He, who was the "Son of God" and the "Son of Man," must have had reasons for all He did. His reason was to preserve truth. He said His words would not pass away, and He meant that even in a literal sense. His words have not passed away, and when they do, His truth will also pass away, for the form is essential to the truth. Just as the shell protects every member of the mollusk kingdom, so does the oratorical form preserve our Lord's truths. We have here a strong reason for studying Christ's style, even as an aid to exegesis. Jesus did not teach abstractly but concretely. He did not present His truths in metaphysical discussion, or logical and philosophical arguments, but in vivid pictures, in parables, and illustrations. We can no more divorce these truths from their garb of parable and illustration than we can take the leading features out of a landscape, scene, or picture. All His forms of expression were crystallizations of truth. Break the crystal and the truth evaporates. This is evident when we examine closely His oratorical diction. We find that He has a figure of speech, illustration, com-

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parison, analogy or parable for every truth moral and spiritual. His doctrine of the Fatherhood of God and the nature of forgiveness is crystalized in the parable of the Prodigal Son. The brotherhood of man has its protecting shell in the parable of the Good Samaritan. Dependence upon Christ glows under the symbols of bread and wine, living water, true vine, door of the sheepfold, the way, the truth and the life. The duty of service, and the true nature of the Christian ministry will live forever in the little drama of words and gestures, set forth in that wonderful scene, the washing of the disciples' feet. If we wish to learn the nature, growth, condition of entrance, service and durability of the Kingdom of Heaven, we must carefully study many parables and illustrations, which, like chariots of fire, cast light into the darkness of the spiritual world. Since every figure, every illustration, every parable encloses truth as a glass globe encircles water, we must be careful not to shatter the globe, but to seek the truth through the transparency of its imagery. Disputed points in interpretation may be solved by correct application of the laws which guided our Master in the selection of His parable illustrations, and in the study of His oratorical methods.

There is still another and very strong reason for studying Christ as an orator, and that is that preaching was to continue, after His death, as a power in His kingdom. Christ did not come simply to preach to His own age, but He organized a kingdom whose truths were to be spread by the power of oratory.

His disciples cannot hope to succeed in establishing and building the kingdom, unless they endeavor to be good preachers like their Master. The ministers of Christ should most certainly study the methods by which Jesus sought to win men, and deem no time, spent in this direction, lost. Preaching was indeed the main influence the Son of Man employed to teach men truth and regenerate the world, and preachers cannot do better or make their preaching more effective than by walking in the footsteps of the Prince of Sacred Orators. Jesus had gifts of eloquence not conferred upon any other, but this, instead of being a reason for neglecting oratorical study, should make every preacher zealous to cultivate whatever there is in his nature resembling the gifts of his Master. In vain, the revelation of God to man through His Son, if in blind reverence for His divine nature, we perceive not the example of His humanity. It was as a man, and to men, that Jesus preached.



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further but we will see.

CHAPTER IV.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS OF POWER IN HIS ORATORY. INTELLECTUAL AND INTUITIONAL.

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IN studying Christ as an orator, we are struck with the fulness and perfection of each and every element of eloquence in His manhood. If in the consideration of the truths He taught and the acts of His life, because of their exalted nature, men have been puzzled to tell where the human ends and the divine begins, and have called Jesus Prophet, King and Son of God, so, as an orator, it is difficult to unfold the human element, since the divine eternally manifests itself. Yet if Christ was the Word or Speech, as John calls Him, there must be the human element, which can be distinguished and described. The records of His life and sayings reveal a wonderful—shall we say a superhuman?—intellectuality. We are amazed, and perplexed, and hardly know how to describe this element in our Lord's character: A keen spontaneous intellectual grasp of truth, a clear mental glance, peering under every subterfuge, that not only reads the character of men, but even the thoughts and feelings swelling within the heart at the very moment. What shall we say of such a power, is it human or divine? Does it belong to perfect innocence; to a perfect harmonious balance of human ele-

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ments; or is it a divine force? It may be both human and divine. Certainly the divine requires perfect instruments of expression, and when the human is most perfect, the more harmonious the balance of power.

This wonderful intellectuality may be traced to the balance of three great elements of mind-power, reason, emotion and spiritual insight. In the harmonious blending of these great elements of mentality is to be found that wonderful power that some men have of grasping truth instantaneously, without the long laborious process of logic or metaphysical cogitation. The gun flashes; we see the flash and know the instrument. The eye looks at the sun, and recognizes, without intermediate process, the light and the cause of the light. This is physical perception, and we need no logician to tell us that the sun exists, or that it is the cause of light. Now there may be such a power in the mind of man. Just as the eye sees objects, so the perfect mental eye may read spiritual truth. But whatever may be the explanation, certain it is that Jesus had an extraordinary development of intuitional perception. In His orations, He never speculates or reasons after the manner of the logician or metaphysician: He utters truth as self-evident, impossible to be doubted. He sees, at a glance, mental and spiritual truth, and arrays it in the most persuasive manner. This high power of intuition in its extraordinary development may be said to transcend the human and pass into the divine. That man becomes most like God whose mental eye discovers truth with quick, vivid and intense appreciation, just as the phys-

certain

ical eye recognizes the rays of the sun. The human mind in its imperfect development may need logic and metaphysics to make truth clear, but the perfect mind the nearer it approaches the divine mind, frees itself from such shackles. This will be evident if we try to restrict the mind of God within the enclosures of syllogism and metaphysical categories. What an absurdity to speak of God as a logician! What need has the divine mind for mental crutches to help reason to make clear in comprehension that which it has made? No, God sees everything, every object, every truth of this vast universe, in its manifold relations, just as it is, in naked simplicity, as it came from His hand.

We have made these preliminary observations in regard to the difference between logical and intuitional apprehension that we might more clearly understand one of the most important elements in Christ's oratory. It was supremely intuitional. His intellectual, emotional and spiritual natures were so balanced, that all His sayings were but the spontaneous expression of truth. Such a combination rendered the expression of His mind intensely original; no borrowed gleams of truth; no transfer of Buddhistic opinions into methods of Jewish thought—as some have asserted,—ever entered the mind of Jesus. He was entirely original in thought and method of expression. Not even the great rabbis had influenced His mind or cramped His intellectuality. Truth glowed in His brain and heart, and came hissing-hot with perfect, pure individuality. As evidence of Christ's originality

of thought and speech, mark how He was opposed by the teachers and doctors of His age. The opposition of scribe, Pharisee, and lawyer, and those learned in the religion of His age was bitter and hostile. If He had been simply a Jewish rabbi or prophet, uttering the truisms of the law and of ecclesiastical interpretations, He would have been welcomed, not opposed. But He was something sublimely greater: He was a prophet of fundamental truth, an orator who drank at the fountain of pure human thought, and at the well of heavenly speech. “For I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest me; and they have received them;” “I have given them Thy word, and the world has hated them.” With such words Jesus plainly told His disciples that His truths were fundamental and original, since they came, through Him, from the source of all truth—God.

The intellectuality and intuition of Jesus made His eloquence wellnigh irresistible. He spoke to the human heart with conviction, because He knew what was in man. Opponents, cavers, enemies, and every class of men, even the indifferent and careless, felt His mighty power, and marvelled, and said, “Whence has this man such wisdom never having any scholastic learning?” Many a time did the multitude exclaim as they listened to His eloquent words, “Thou hast the words of wisdom and peace.” This deep, keen intellectuality made the sayings of Jesus powerful upon every occasion, especially when He grappled with an antagonist. Christ was strong of mind and body, strong of will and mental acumen. He was no mere

humble child. When He spoke, His every word was a thunderbolt of majesty and power. His intellectual sharpness and force, superb in its oratorical manifestations, ought to be more prominently portrayed, in order to make His life and mission more clear. We overlook the richness of His intellectuality, because we are so prone to robe Jesus in garments of our own making. We more often think of Him as a humble, retiring, reverential, placid man, than what He really was, a public-spirited, brave, thoughtful, energetic orator. It was this wonderful intellectual power that so amazed and bewildered His antagonists. Many a time did they tremble before His indignant glance, and retire in confusion; their plans of hate, and their evil motives discovered and outwitted by His keen, sarcastic eloquence.

The scribes and Pharisees, those crafty teachers of the religion of the day, sought by every stratagem; every subterfuge of speech and act, every plausible pretence, and hypocritical phrase to entangle Him in His talk, but to no purpose. They were defeated again and again. Maddened by repeated repulses, and smarting under the public contempt, which His words of irony kindled, they would make alliances with every base cause, every mean party. Even the Herodians, their bitter enemies, were employed to ensnare the Prince of Orators, but without success. In these repulses, although Jesus made use of sarcastic, and even taunting, language, and often gave way to indignant outbursts of feeling, yet His manner was so calm and gracious, avoiding every handle for misrepresentation

Majesty
shown

and every word of impatience or hate, that they were astounded, and could find nothing wherewith to accuse Him. There are so many examples of this intellectual power in the oratorical contests of Jesus, that it is difficult to make selection. As He was watched and dogged at every step by His enemies, whose snares and traps every now and then had to be demolished, there is to be found in almost every speech of our Lord, evidence of His wonderful power of reply. During the last two weeks, however, of His life, as He asserted, more openly and boldly by speech and act, His claim to be the promised Messiah, and His enemies pressed more closely their schemes of hostility and attempts upon His life, we find the greatest examples of His intellectual power of reply.

After His triumphal journey to Jerusalem, accompanied by His disciples and a vast multitude whose cries of "Hosanna! to the son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!" exasperated the Pharisees beyond measure, Jesus entered the Temple and took possession of all things, as was His custom. He healed the lame, blind, and diseased, who came thronging to the temple, with the gracious words of His lips, and the magnetic balm of His gestures. The courts and halls of the sacred house re-echoed again and again with the loud Hosanna, as each golden word fell from His mouth, and healing action from His hand. The very children joined in the cry, "Hosanna! to the son of David!" "Do you see how powerless we are against Him?" muttered the Pharisees. "The whole people have gone out after Him."

What shall we do if this bold speaker is not put to silence? He will persuade all the people of Jerusalem and win them to His cause, then what becomes of our influence? See! He has already taken possession of the Temple, and seeks to disannul our authority, and every one responds to His words, and shouts His praises. Shall we seize Him now in the height of His folly?" "Nay," said the more thoughtful, "the people will defend Him; we must use subtilty and crafty speech." With that the cries of the children rang out again clearer than before: "Hosanna! Hosanna! to the son of David!" What awful infatuation is this? They were exceedingly enraged and shouted to Jesus, "Hear-est Thou not what these say?" But Jesus instead of disavowing the supreme power ascribed to Him, boldly accepted it, and replied by a prophecy which they themselves understood to apply to the Messiah: "Have ye never read, 'Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou (Jehovah) hast perfected praise, that Thou mightest put to shame Thine enemies and silence Thy foes, and those who rise up against Thee?'" The Pharisees were baffled and could not answer, and retired to plot against Him.

Then followed the clearing of the Temple, our Lord casting out the money changers, and those who desecrated the sacred enclosure by their dishonest bargains. The Temple attendants were enraged, and joined with the Pharisees, determined to bring Him to account. They thought they had now definite, open, and clear evidence of His guilt. The procession which He had led into the city could be interpreted as an act hostile

to the rule of Cæsar, and the clearing of the Temple was surely a breach of priestly authority. So a deputation of priests, rabbis, and Temple officers came in upon Jesus, as He was addressing the people, and abruptly interrupting His discourse, asked Him by what authority He had acted as He had done, and was doing. It was a deep-laid snare; they hoped by their question to wring from His lips some word or phrase, claiming divine authority, which would be a ground for a definite charge against Him. But Jesus showed Himself on this occasion a speaker of instant and ready resource, a keen disputant, prompt to act and mighty to turn defence into attack.

He resorted to one of His most effectual instruments of combat, one that He had tried so often and always with success, to answer one question by asking another: "Before I answer your question, let me ask you one which has a direct bearing upon the subject. You know of one, John the Baptist, a good man, revered by the people, while he was yet alive, and teaching in your cities, what think you of his work? Did he act in obedience to God, as one sent by Him, or was his work without divine authority?" Immediately they felt the cold serpent-coil of their own plot surround them. It was not only extremely exasperating to be thus forced to answer their own question, but to be compelled to speak words that would acknowledge His Messianic claim was still worse. They knew from the very nature of the question now propounded that in some way Jesus referred to the relation between Himself and the Baptist. He implied that the man

who had struck such a terror into the hearts of ecclesiastics, and had won the admiration of the people everywhere, was His forerunner or herald, the very Elias that must precede the Messiah. They were bewildered and reasoned within themselves: "If we say, that John's commission was from Heaven, then He will say why did you not believe him? If we say of men, these people now assembled will surely vent their wrath and indignation upon us, for all men regard John as a prophet." To avoid so disastrous a dilemma they sought to escape by a confession of ignorance and indifference, "We cannot tell whether John's mission was from God or not." This was just what Jesus had expected, and so He answered in the same indifferent strain, "It is evident from your answer, that John had no authority from you, and yet he acted as I have done, preaching and doing the work of a prophet. If it was not worth your while to sanction, or even decide respecting him, you cannot, with reason, claim authority over me. You have my answer in the same indifferent strain you put your question; 'Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.'" It was enough: He had silenced His opponents. Yet Jesus was too earnest a speaker, too much in love with His divine work, to let them escape so easily. He would try once more to open their understanding to the danger of their false position. So He turns defence into attack, and strikes a fearful blow by relating a parable, that if rightly interpreted reveals their wicked and false position. (Matthew XXI., 28—32.)

"But what think you? A certain man had two

Saviour!
Master!
Comforter!
the grandeur & glory of such a

sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not; but afterward he repented and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir; and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, the first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily, I say unto you, that the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." There was something exceedingly crushing in the eloquent manner of His address. He spoke as one perfectly at ease, as if He had taken the measure of their minds and expected each assault and had foreseen each effect. It was indeed high eloquence, born of strong feeling and keen intellect wrought up to the intensity of white heat, but perfectly calm and self-composed. It was the eloquence of a master-mind working in the very regions where they thought themselves to be masters. They were fearfully puzzled, and felt the searching glance of Jesus more keenly, because, as high dignitaries of the church, the multitude that surged around would expect to hear them answer such pertinent questions in a skilful and learned manner. That Christ was a consummate master of the method of foiling an adversary with his own weapons may be clearly seen by the way the story is framed, since but one answer can be given, and that answer will be a full vindication of all He had done, and an awful condemnation of themselves. They would fain refuse to answer but they feared the criticism of the people, so, covered with shame and confusion, and hardly know-

ing the import of what they were saying, they answered, "The first."

Jesus follows up the attack with a stern rebuke: "You say rightly, now hear the explanation of the story. You are the second son who promised but did not go, for when John came to you, scribes, priests and elders, in the power of God, preaching repentance and righteousness, you honored him with smooth professions, yet did not follow the teachings of John, nor help him in his work, but rather sat idle, and showed by your neglect to obey, that you disbelieved his message. But, on the other hand, the publicans and sinners and the multitude of common folk, whom you despise, are the first son. For although they roughly and carelessly refused at first the gracious invitation of the Father to work in His vineyard, yet at the summons of John, they repented, and, believing his message, brought forth works meet for repentance. As it was in the days of John, it has ever been with you; ye speak smoothly and promise well, but your thoughts and works are not righteous, but are full of malice and evil plots." He might now have left them alone, for they were very much humiliated in the presence of the people by His striking application of the story to themselves, and the indirect allusion that as they had rejected the message of John, so they were now rejecting His; but He was very much aroused, and His feelings intensified His utterance, and He lets fall another thunderbolt by relating another parable which brings out his claim to be the Son of God and their dreadful crime in rejecting Him more vividly. (Matthew XXI., 33-44. Luke XX., 9-16.)

There was something so irresistible in the arguments of this parable and in its striking phraseology that when it was delivered in the pathetic tones of His voice and illustrated by His appropriate gestures, it sank into their hearts with dread conviction, and, in spite of themselves, they uttered their own condemnation: "The lord will come and utterly destroy these wicked men, and will give the vineyard to others, who will render him his fruits in their season." What marvelous power of eloquence! What extraordinary keenness of intellect did Jesus manifest in His appeal to their better nature, to their conscience! Wicked, miserable, sinful in their lives, even now their hearts beating with desire to kill, yet the reproving conscience is there, and they exclaim aloud, "The Lord will utterly destroy them;" and then realizing the real and awful symbolization of the parable, that it applies to themselves, that they may be regarded as the wicked husbandmen who killed the son of the lord, and perceiving that the judgment they had pronounced against others, might fall on them, they cry out in terror: "God forbid, oh! God forbid!" What potent power was here in this man's oratory? Did ever eloquence, guided by intuitional intellect, penetrate hearts so dead with sin, awaken consciences, warped by casuistical reasoning and hypocritical practice and compel them to cry out in condemnation of themselves? They now began to feel something worse than embarrassment and shame. Some subtle, mysterious force seemed to glow in the words of Jesus, and flash from His eyes. They felt more than un-

comfortable, when He looked at them with steady gaze. A spirit that spoke of Heaven more than of earth, of a place of judgment where they would be the criminals, not the judges, seemed to look out from those large, lustrous eyes, and strike them with strange horror and desire to flee. They were going, but Jesus, looking at them steadily, and raising His voice prevents them from retiring by a further question, "What is this then that is written, 'The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner, (Luke XX, 17-18) the main foundation.' Jehovah has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes."

The meaning was clear if there had been doubt in their minds before in regard to the interpretation and application of the prophecy there could be none now, for so intense was the manner of Jesus, and so full of suggestion was His every attitude, that they clearly perceived that He claimed to be the Messiah. As He stood in their presence, looking full into their faces, they caught His meaning. You know this verse, you know that the chief cornerstone is only an oratorical expression for the Messiah. And if so, according to your prophets, the Messiah is to be rejected by you. In rejecting me, you have rejected the chief cornerstone. And now since God is building His new kingdom upon this rejected cornerstone, your kingdom is at an end. You have fallen upon this stone, and are broken, and when the new kingdom is built, this stone shall fall upon you and grind you to powder. Like a crash of thunder, His words fell upon them, sending peal after peal of conviction into their startled minds.

Their guilty conscience cried out, "He is speaking these parables against us." Never, perhaps, had any speech uttered by Christ stirred their hatred and fear so much as this one, in which he so clearly asserted His divine claims, and also made this awful announcement, that the kingdom would be taken away and given to the nations, and that in the midst of their sloth and iniquity they would perish. They were exceedingly wroth, and gnashed upon Him with their teeth, and some even sought to lay hands upon Him. But there was something about the majestic bearing of the sacred orator that held them back, something that seemed to say, "Ye have no power over me now for my hour is not yet come." But they were restless: something must be done to put Him to silence. They clearly saw by the actions of the people that they regarded Him as the greatest prophet that had yet appeared, if not the long-promised Messiah. Every word that He spoke seemed to gain Him supporters, while their adherents were becoming fewer. Never before had Jesus spoken so boldly or so persuasively. They felt that His intellect was vastly superior to theirs, deeper in penetration, more fertile in resource and overwhelming in its power to perceive motives, even the hidden plans of the heart, and to meet and crush every dark subterfuge and secret plot. What shall they do? One thing they have determined in their hearts, His eloquence must be stopped. And so they watched Him, and sent forth spies, which would feign themselves just men that they might take hold of His words and interpret them to mean high

treason against the Roman government. Many a deep plot had the Pharisees laid, many a time had they sought audience with the Great Orator, but His eloquence had always put them to shame.

They held a consultation with the Herodians, their deadly enemies, but hostile hands sometimes clasp in friendship long enough to effect some common purpose. Obscure men unknown to Jesus were chosen to go to the Great Teacher and to pretend themselves anxious as sincere Jews in all matters of practice to get His council on a much disputed question. Perhaps this plot was the most dangerous ever laid for man; it was awful in its hypocrisy and cruel purpose. Will the innocent object of their secret designs be able to defend Himself? Will His strong intellectual intuition perceive the crafty thoughts and the guile, lurking in the sweet accents of their words? To disarm all thought of evil intent, they came to Jesus in the form of smooth dissimulation, hiding their real purpose under plausible pretence. "Rabbi," they said to Him with flattering tongue and humble looks, "we know," and as they uttered the words they assumed the accents of earnestness, and the attitude of courtesy, "we know that Thou art true and teachest the way of God in truth, neither standest Thou in awe of any man; for Thou art no respecter of persons. Tell us therefore is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not? This tax so odious to every true patriot, but the legality of which these Herodians now before you maintain, ought we, or ought we not to pay it? Master, decide for us please."

The mode of approach adopted was well-chosen, it

was apparently frank and courteous, and designed to throw Christ off His guard. He must, they thought, answer "yes," or "no." He must meet an open and definite question by a frank and positive answer. But under the honied accents and deferential gesture already began to appear the poison of guile, hate, and treachery. If He should say, they mused, "yes, it is lawful," though by such a decision He would gain the Herodians, and keep on the side of Cæsar's government, yet He would lose the support of the people, who were strongly opposed to the payment of the tax, and they would be enraged against Him, and regard Him as no patriot, and perhaps surrender Him to the Pharisees to work their hatred upon Him. If on the other hand He should favor the patriotic opinion, and declare the tribute unlawful, then most assuredly He would fall into their power, for it could be proved that He was in open rebellion against the Roman government, and the Herodians would at once hand Him over to justice. But the Prince of Orators was equal to meet their bland and subtle speech. That most wonderful intellectual perception was never more vividly or more powerfully displayed, than on this momentous and trying occasion. With breathless interest Pharisees and Herodians stand, waiting an answer to their question. Like a flash of lightning from a cloudless sky, fell the scathing words from the Orator's lips, that declared He had divined their purpose. They had dared to approach Him with their purring, soft accents of mock reverence and feigned epithets of true, fearless and honorable "Master." He blasts them

divine

with one scorching word "hypocrites," His tone and manner revealing His righteous indignation. Their hopes fell to the ground, their plots crumbled into the dust before His searching glance, and sarcastic word: "Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Bring me the tribute-money."

They brought Him a Roman denarius. On one side were stamped the features of the Emperor Tiberius, on the other his title of Pontifex Maximus. "Whose image and superscription is this?" He asked. They say unto Him, "Cæsar's." "Render, therefore, unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." Once more the awful intellectual power of the great Orator had vanquished them. They could not help seeing in the dramatic action that accompanied the words of Jesus an unfathomable majesty of wisdom and glory. What was that mysterious power that seemed to be ever present with Him, and like a guardian-god never failed Him, but flashed from His eye and glowed in every word? "Bring me the tribute-money;" "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's;" how dramatic and decisive the action, and with what awe-inspiring tones of divine authority they fell upon their ears. Their sound must have followed them, as they slunk away from His presence. Every mesh of the net of their sophistical malice broken, their plans, that had appeared inscrutable, discovered, and themselves frustrated, and cheated of their victim, they ground their teeth in the bitter misery of disappointed revenge. The intellect that could perceive a plot so

crafty and so well-conducted, and devise means so natural, true and honorable to defeat it, is surely the supremest intellect in the universe. We have not space to illustrate farther the intellectual brilliancy of Christ's eloquence. His sermons are replete with the utterances of wisdom and intellectual intuition.

He was Supreme!

Beheld Him and
treat Him as if He were
as He is in all things true!



CHAPTER V.

SOUL QUALITIES; DRAMATIC INSIGHT.

JESUS was wont to call Himself the Son of Man. No higher or clearer term could be found to express His exalted combination of human qualities; for hardly have we begun to measure His wonderful intellectual gifts, that render His eloquence so marked, than we are struck with another, and still more potent, range of qualities, that mould and influence, to an extraordinary degree, His spoken words. These are His soul qualities; His spiritual and moral earnestness, and His conscious oneness with His Father, His perfect humanity, all left their trace upon His oratory. One of the most influential elements of impression was His sublime, undaunted courage, which at all times, and in all situations, stood behind His words: The man was infinitely greater than His utterance.

Nothing arrests the attention of men so powerfully as exhibitions of courage. Thousands will run to witness displays of physical powers of endurance, or control over life and death. Life is so precious in the estimation of mankind, that the spectacle of a person struggling to save or surrender it for a noble purpose is exceedingly fascinating. Situations where life is

imperiled call forth the highest dramatic interest, and render the ordinary prosaic scenes of life a vast theatre of excitement. A railroad accident, the fall of a public building, crushing out life, the awful swirl of the cyclone, bringing destruction everywhere, and the destroying march of some great conflagration, demanding exertions of strength and skill to save life, never fail to interest men. So also, in the higher moral life of man, courage in the defence of opinion, steadfast adherence to purpose amid persecution and danger awaken sympathetic admiration and lend persuasion to the spoken word.

Moral courage was a leading characteristic of the eloquence of Jesus. Truly did His hearers say of Him, "Master, Thou art no respecter of persons, and stand in awe of no man;" for in the proclamation of truth, He feared no man, neither priest, ruler, Pharisee, nor publican, rich or powerful; all alike were reproved, rebuked and denounced by Him. His moral courage shone with dazzling splendor in many encounters with His enemies, and made His delivery sublimely impressive. The age stood in need of a fearless preacher; religion had degenerated into spectacular worship, shows, ceremonies and traditions. The people were ground under the tyrannical heel of an effete religious despotism. Some bold spirit must herald reform, must uncover the foolish external, which men worshipped instead of the religion of Moses and the prophets. Jesus boldly preached against these abuses. When the Pharisees found fault because His disciples ate with unwashed hands, thus

breaking the commandments of the church, they were met defiantly by Jesus: "You ask me why my disciples violate the traditions of the church, because they eat with unwashed hands. I will reply by asking you a similar question, why do you violate the commandments of God by your traditions? Ye hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, 'This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me, but in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.'"

With like characteristic boldness, He refused to work miracles to satisfy inquisitive and sceptical minds. "Master, we would seek a sign from Thee." "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh a sign, and no sign shall be given them," was the reply of Jesus. He never hesitated to preach the truth, even if a storm should be the result, and should it arise while preaching, He only reiterated His statement, even more emphatically. When the Jews murmured and said, "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" He repeats the objectionable words with steadier voice, and more determined enunciation. When His disciples came, excitedly running, and informed Him that the Pharisees were displeased at what He said, He only replied with the utmost indifference, but with the splendid spirit of a great reformer, "I will root up everything that is not true according to the source of all truth."

His words and actions during the suffering scenes in the Garden of Gethsemane were manly and heroic. The narratives which contain the few words spoken on that occasion, are so dramatic with the noble pathos

and calm action of the Great Sufferer, that all the world reads them with a thrill of awe. His bearing during the arrest is superhuman in grandeur. The Great Orator, in the retirement of His loved resort, is betrayed by one of His own little band. The shadows of night have fallen deep and heavily over the garden; and His enemies led on by the traitor Judas stand before Him with flaming torches and gleaming weapons. The Master has no weapon, except the one that has won all His victories, and has so often struck His enemies with terror,—the weapon of oratory.

With fearless bearing He steps forward, and demands in the clear, ringing voice they had heard so oft in temple, synagogue and wherever men assemble, “Whom seek ye?” They say, “Jesus of Nazareth.” “I am He.” Short indeed the utterance, perhaps the most concise that ever fell from an orator’s lips, but it was most wonderfully magnetic. His whole life, His noble daring, His marvelous works, and His mysterious relation with the Father seemed to ring in these words, and give them an overwhelming power, for as soon as He spake, they fell backwards to the ground, and dared not advance a step. Then rang out clear again, “I am He;” and the sarcastic denunciation, as bold as ever comes, in the awful words, “Are ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves? When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hand against me; but this is your hour and of the power of darkness.” With such heroic resolutions did Jesus always enforce His truths. His kingly bearing before Pilate, and His noble, calm utterance during the

trial, and His majesty of manner and impressive, manly speech during the crucifixion are simply beyond the human; they pass into the divine. We can trace the impression of His great moral courage in the very language of His thought, His firm conviction and self-reliance, and the grand conception of His mission sought expression in bold images and defiant words.

His wisdom was also a strong element in His oratory. "Knowledge is power," is a common saying, but it ought to be expressed thus, "The right use of knowledge is power." Knowledge sometimes dims the mental horizon, instead of enlightening it. Many a scholar, in the acquirement of verbal and factual knowledge, has lost his inspirational and intuitional power. Knowledge should become wisdom, in order to be a power in oratory. Men are not made better by quotations nor enumeration of facts. Encyclopedias are useful to draw from, but very poor to go to for advice; that is best found where there is life as well as fact. Knowledge and wisdom, so far from being one, have often no connection. The intellect that is well stored with the sayings of other men, may not have original thought. On the other hand, if knowledge undigested is sometimes a hindrance to impressive speech, ignorance is still worse. The empty speech of an ignorant man is worse than the full speech of a pedantic one. Strike the golden mean, seek not knowledge, but wisdom; for wisdom is well digested knowledge. Every kind of knowledge that makes a man wiser and more keen of intellect, and supplies illustrations is valuable in oratory. It was a true remark made by those who

heard Christ speak, "Whence has this man such wisdom, never having learned?" But they forgot that there is a wisdom that comes by attending to one's own thoughts and by inspiration. Such was the wisdom of Christ; it was His own and He spoke with the force of an original thinker. Jesus was acquainted with the literature of His day. He knew the Old Testament, and used it in His speeches, not in lengthy quotations, but simply to convince those who believed, thus meeting them on their own ground. That He had a profound reverence for these Scriptures, and regarded them as of high authority is evident from many passages. But His great appeal to prove His truths was to the court of their self-evidence. His indignation was great against those who sought to place their traditions above the Scriptures. "Ye make the truth of none effect by your traditions." When the people were averse to His doctrine, He would appeal to what the prophets had said, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of this generation." "The men of Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonah, but behold a greater than Jonah is here." He often appealed to the well-known facts of the scenes in Scripture; the wandering in the wilderness, the eating of manna, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, are examples of His use of Scripture to enforce His teaching. But it is wonderful to find that He made so little scholastic use of what He must have known from His youth up. He never sacrifices the force of original thought to show erudition. He had none of that homiletical balancing of text against text, or proving doctrines by a multitude of authorities, so

characteristic of some preachers. His great court of appeal, like all eminent masters of thought, was to the self-evident nature of everything that is true. Truth needs no proof, but only that the vapor of prejudice and the fog of superstition should be brushed aside. Fifty thousand Biblical texts, or a million of authoritative quotations cannot make murder right, and not even one quotation is needed to make it wrong. All the knowledge of Jesus was so assimilated in His own original conception, that wisdom only appeared.

It was well for the world that He was not a speaker full of quotations but an original thinker, for like the rabbis, if He had made a few statements of truth, and then spent most of His time in citing authorities, He might have made a smart rabbi, but not the Prophet of the Universe. That the Gospels are rich treasures of wisdom and thought is because Christ was an original thinker, rather than a scholar. The assertion of some leading scholars of our day, that because they find many truths taught by Jesus in the great religions of the world, that Christ was simply a learned man, who culled from every source, is exceedingly foolish. Such minds must be very small in original thought, and enslaved to the scholastic method of acquiring wisdom through the memory only; since they have no perception of the capacity of the human mind to think and discover truth for itself. To such it seems impossible that two or more persons should discover the same truth, that there could be rich wells of truth in India or China, and Christ, not having drunk, could utter the same truth. Truth has always been in the

universe and is the exclusive property of none, and comes to every man who seeks for it independently, and without regard to time, race or place. Christ did not require to borrow truth from all the prophets of the world; He had the prophetic mind Himself, and the truth came unbidden. The most alien thought to His mind was the founding of a universal religion from a scrapbook of quotations, collected from philosophy and works of piety. This original grasp of truth was an element of power in His oratory, which no amount of acquired knowledge could have given Him. When you hear a man striving to prove his position by many quotations, you may rightly conclude that he does not know much himself about the truth he utters. The people of Christ's day were right, when they said, He spoke with authority, and not like their rabbis. They had a true perception of the majesty of original thought. Their rabbis had apparently all that constitutes authority, for they sat in the seat of Moses, and the social arrangements of the day made them masters, and taught high reverence for what they said and did. On the other hand, Christ was not a legal rabbi, neither did He have a certificate from their schools, yet He spoke with such force that He made Himself an authority.

What He taught also was so important, so elevating and so necessary to mankind, that it must have had a power in itself. The creation of the world, the plan of redemption, God's love and justice, the sublime idea of self-sacrifice, future rewards and punishments have overwhelming oratoric power. But there was

if right
by-

something about the method of His teaching truth, so different from the method of other teachers, more grand than the truth itself. It is the method that made His truth powerful. It was the oratorical manner, carried out with dramatic power. It is hard to make this method of presenting truth clear to our minds; we are so prone to value truth for itself; to regard wisdom as the knowledge of so many facts, that we lose what may be called the expressional side of truth. There is an acting or doing side to truth, without which truth is of no utility. It was this side that shone conspicuously in our Saviour's eloquence. He never spoke of truth in the abstract, as something to be handled and laid aside, or as so much baggage or furniture to select from, but as something to be acted upon and as having no existence until the soul grapples with it. "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you," is a truth which cannot be separated from its expressional side. It is only learned by dramatic action, you must put yourself in your neighbor's place, think his thoughts and do his acts; "Ye must be born again." What is that but such an exercise of the soul, that the spiritual nature reclothes itself in a new body. His great truth of the brotherhood of man can hardly be considered in the abstract; it becomes evident only in the practice. Men were to serve one another, and dignity and power were to be considered in the light of service. The servant of all is to be the greatest. Then again how closely are such truths connected with their expression, when it is considered how they need action to realize them. Every truth Christ

not a
bit of
too com
brach
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taught has its oratorical side. God cannot be served unless we serve others; to scatter plenty upon the children of men, to give a cup of water in the name of Christ, to teach a child, to visit the widows and orphans in their affliction and to keep one's self unspotted from the world, is the true way to serve God. Wealth does not consist in the abundance of material things, but in actions of joy and beneficence, in doing good, in using money to relieve suffering or to advance morality, education and virtue. Thus we see that the expressional side of truth in the oratory of Christ is of even more importance than the truth itself.

Still more wonderful, in an oratorical sense, is the method of our Lord in acting out His own truth. His life was a great drama, with many scenes vivid and impressive, short and long, ordinary and elevated, full of pathos, sublimity and reality. Anyone can gain a complete knowledge of the plan of redemption, the doctrine of God's love and the saving efficacy of self-sacrifice from the scenes of Christ's life alone. There is no truth He uttered, but some act in His life gave it clearness and force. If the nature of the kingdom is service, the little episode of washing the disciples, feet teaches it. The eating of bread and wine set forth in action for all time the nature of the memorial feast of Communion. The agony in the Garden of Gethsemane teaches, in most awful, sublime action, the nature of heroic resolution and perseverance. And finally by a series of dramatic actions and living words, the cross and crucifixion teach to all eternity with

Imperfectly

unearthly awe and splendor, the doctrine of self-sacrificing love, laying down one's life for another. What mysterious visions flood through the mind, alive to this dramatic way of expressing truth chosen by Christ. "Himself bore our grief and infirmities." He acted truth, dramatized the great spiritual doctrines of the world by the acts of His own life. How could eloquence fail that had so much dramatic power? The very thought and teaching, swallowed up in act, gesture and life. Beyond all other men who have influenced the world by speech, Christ must have impressed all with the sincerity of what He uttered, because His life was such a beautiful expression of the truth He taught. Conviction was in His attitude, as well as in His word. He was preëminently an orator who taught by example as well as by precept.

Another gift which rendered His eloquence impressive was His high spirituality. He seemed to have such a clear perception of the visible and invisible world, that He conceived of them as one. The relationship was so close, that the breeze of the eternal world seemed to waft Him inspiration, as He stood upon the time-decaying shores of this mortal world. Sacred, mysterious union with God, Who was ever-present with Him and flooding His soul with rich truth. "The words that I speak and the works that I do, are of Heaven;" "The Father beareth witness of Me;" "I came forth from My Father, and will return to Him;" "I and My Father are One." Such was the sacred relationship, that made Him speak of spiritual truth, as if He could handle it. Even so

very true

True

He is God!

mysterious a thing as life, He could speak of as within His control, "I can lay down My life, and have power to take it up again." The eternal world was so plain to Him, that He could see its various mansions. Impressive and awe-inspiring must have been the eloquence springing from such a conviction. If sincerity and conviction in the mind of the speaker are of high importance, here they were richer and deeper than in any mortal being. His lips were sweet with the honey of divine wisdom, and His thoughts beat in the waves of spiritual light, coming from a sun that shines in wondrous firmaments, beyond the ken of human knowledge.

*The
sun.*



No doubt

CHAPTER VI.

PROFOUND AND POPULAR QUALITIES.

SUCH being His mental gifts, we should expect His sermons to be remarkable expositions of truth, profound in matter and attractive in form; and so indeed they were. His preaching combined apparently opposite qualities, deep thinking and rhetorical presentation; His intellect saw truth, not as abstract facts to be reasoned about but as first principles, axioms and self-evident propositions. Hence He never speaks in metaphysical phraseology, or in terms of abstract and concrete, positive and negative, subjective and objective, or in scholastic terms, or after the manner of the rabbis of His own country in dreary quotations of authority, but rather in glowing oratorical pictures. His rare combination of imaginative and emotional fervor clothed His thought with vivid imagery and a wealth of expression. His truths, although profound in the highest degree, since they were drawn from the very heart of things, were yet so beautifully, earnestly and strikingly expressed by illustration and brilliant figures of speech, that the simplest mind was attracted by them, and easily comprehended their application. Some minds no doubt delight to hear truth expressed in the ob-

scurity of metaphysical language, regarding such a garb as more profound, but no philosopher ever expressed the Fatherhood of God so clearly or impressively as Christ did in the simple phrase "How much more?" "If ye being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children," He says, "how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" See what a vast field of truth He embraced by thus presenting it in pictorial figures of speech! Some of the truths which His vivid rhetoric made so clear and concise would have been muddy, even after pages of metaphysical dissertation had set them forth. How plain obedience to God becomes as the sole aim of life in His mighty expression "No man can serve two masters." Such an expression solves a thousand questions we ask ourselves in practical life, and shows clearly our duty and the utter foolishness of plausible schemes by which we adhere to the world and delay the worship of God. What philosopher ever taught so clearly the great truth of God's Providence as the comparison Jesus makes between God's care for bird-life and human life. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing and yet your Heavenly Father cares for them so lovingly that not one can fall to the ground without His notice." "How much more valuable are ye than many sparrows." It was the union of the oratorical emotions with keen intellect that made His words always strike with persuasive force. While learned doctors exclaimed, "Whence has this man so much wisdom," the common people heard Him gladly, for they understood His

truths, though profound, because of their vivid phraseology and His expressive delivery. His ability as a preacher impressed all kinds of hearers. The scribes, Pharisees and lawyers came to hear Him, even in the beginning of His mission as a preacher, and although the most of their rabbis opposed Him, yet nearly all admitted His great wisdom and gifts of speech. The less bigoted of the rabbis like Nicodemus came to Him and sat under His preaching, and acknowledged His wisdom and originality. For He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

They declared they beheld in Jesus an uncommon wisdom and an extraordinary power of expression. He was to the people, learned and ignorant, a marvel, for He was unlike any teacher they had ever listened to. His methods were entirely original. He did not, like their rabbis, painfully repeat what had been committed, but He spoke apparently without any preparation, never at a loss for a word or a picture, an image or an illustration, to enforce His truth. They were amazed at His fluency of thought and diction. From His mind truth came, not in little sparks, but in brilliant flashes, and pressed upon them, not in little wavelets, but in the mighty surges of the incoming tide. Unlike the wise philosophers of former ages, or of His own age, He did not doubt, and handle truth with hesitating hand and limited phrase, but He brought it forth out of darkness and mystery into a cloudless sky. The people liked to hear Him talk so they followed Him.

So vast were the multitudes that came to hear Him

that, Matthew tells us, He was moved with compassion because they had no shepherd, and gave vent to His feelings in the memorable words, "The harvest truly is plenteous but the laborers are few." And He sent forth His disciples to preach the word. The people pressed upon Him to hear the word of God. (Luke V., 1.) The publicans and sinners drew near unto Him. (Luke XV., 1.) On many occasions so great were the crowds that came to hear Him, that He entered a boat, and pushed out from the shore to avoid the pressure. Sometimes the multitude was so great that they trod one upon another.

The preaching of Jesus not only drew multitudes but accomplished results. It reached every class of minds, in some way producing an effect. Some were convinced in mind and persuaded in heart, and left all and followed Him. The tax-collector at the receipt of custom, the fishermen mending their nets, heard His voice and obeyed. The vilest sinners were fascinated and followed, terror-stricken and convinced, to hear some word of forgiveness. The diseased, and those possessed with devils heard His words and were made whole. So powerful was His preaching that on several occasions it stirred the multitudes so that they pressed upon Him, and would make Him their king by force. "When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take Him by force, to make Him a king, He departed again into a mountain, Himself alone." His preaching was with power, for where it did not strike with terror or conviction it raised opposition. True preaching is just as much to be estima-

ted by the opposition it raises as by the followers it obtains. To speak the truth makes enemies. The evil liver, the prosperous sinner, and the rich fool dislike to be exposed and reformed. The voice of an honest man sounds hard to the grasping, dishonest merchant. The sensual, intemperate man hates the rebukes of the clean, temperate and pure. The hypocrite, feeding his soul on useless forms and ceremonies, grinds his teeth with hate under the orator's sarcastic tongue. Weak indeed is the preaching that raises no enemies. The oratory of Jesus was with power, for it raised a storm of opposition in every quarter. The Pharisees and scribes disliked it, because it rebuked in sarcastic tones their narrow bigotry. The life of Jesus was anything but peaceful. His bold declarations of truth always brought Him into conflict.

His first speech, delivered in His native city, Nazareth, stirred up His townsmen against Him, and they rose up and thrust Him out of the city, led Him to a precipice, and sought to cast Him down headlong. Not a very encouraging beginning of ministerial labors! Yet how many young ministers despair at very slight opposition, and would fain relinquish their field of labor, because some church warden, or pious old deacon, or rich sinner is offended at their preaching. Let all ministers study the example of Christ, Who did not despair because His preaching raised the whirlwind. A popularity that brings no opposition, no word of criticism, is sickly, sentimental, and worldly, and denotes a time-serving preacher, who

down
now!
they

panders to the taste of his people, and tones his discourse to condone their sins. The opposition to the preaching of the Prince of Orators was strong and continuous, it followed Him wherever He went. Men went about to ensnare and bring Him before governors, that He might be cast into prison. Sometimes, when He preached more boldly and pointedly, His listeners took up stones and cast them at Him. Many a time they gnashed their teeth with hatred and sought to kill Him. Sometimes He preached in places where the intellect and spirituality of the people were so dead that He could not make them understand, and He could do no mighty work among them, but that did not discourage Him. He was no young deacon with a first parish, sighing and wishing for another cure because the people would not work, but a practical and experienced minister who knew the people's hearts and could not be discouraged in His work of love by opposition, deadness or non-receptivity. When Christ was opposed He simply asked them, "For what good work do you stone me?" And when they refused to hear His preaching He calmly said, "He that hath ears to hear let him hear," or when they spurned His teaching He sarcastically said, "Let them alone, they be blind leaders of the blind; and if the blind lead the blind both shall fall into the ditch." And whenever it was asserted that His truth was in contradiction to received dogma He would answer, "Every plant which my Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." In order to justly estimate His success as a preacher we must take into account the spiritual con-

dition of the age in which He labored. For it was a dead age, an age when the inner spiritual nature was blind. His striking oratorical expression reveals how degenerate was the religious worship of His day. "This people wax gross." "Having eyes they see not, having ears they hear not."

It is true that Jesus did not leave a favorable or permanent impression on all He addressed; for although many were convinced and became His steadfast disciples, yet some were impressed by feelings altogether foreign to His teaching, and failed to grasp His divine mission or acknowledge His claims. But Jesus prepared the way. He opened the eyes of the spiritually blind and made the lame of intellect to think rightly, and cast abroad the seed of the kingdom, that bore fruit under the preaching of His apostles. But supposing He did not convert many of the multitudes, He did that which reveals a greater power of preaching than any mere conversion of the multitude: He inspired chosen men with His own spirit, wisdom, and eloquence. He selected a number of men, taught them so clearly His truths, and inspired them so fully with His eloquence that they almost preached with the same mighty power. So that He lived and preached in them, and under their guidance, and through the instrumentality of their preaching His kingdom was built. No greater confirmation of the power of Christ's oratory can be found than the fact that it has left a permanent trace on the history of the world. All that is good and noble in our civilization can be traced to the preaching of Jesus.

Done! True!

*Beyond all description
or just conception!*

CHAPTER VII.

No earthly description adequate or candid

THE PERSONAL APPEARANCE OF CHRIST.

HOWEVER great his internal gifts, an orator must also have the instruments of expression well developed in order to sway men. Great orators have been indebted for their influence to their marked physical gifts. A sound mind in a sound body is even more important in the field of eloquence than elsewhere. A commanding stature, expressive face, and dramatic action have great influence over men. Beauty and symmetry of form render the expression of truth more attractive. Had Christ any of the outward graces of eloquence? How much of His wonderful power to draw men can be traced to His physical development? What was the appearance of Christ? Unfortunately very little is related in regard to His face and form by sacred or secular writers; and that little is so colored by unnatural conception that we do not know how to separate truth from falsehood. There are many pictures or likenesses of Christ which have come down to our day, but we have no reliable statement as to when and where these pictures were taken, and so different are the pictures in conception and design that it would

be hazardous to make a selection. A faithful likeness of Christ would not only be useful in ascertaining His physical qualities as an orator, but the whole Christian world would like to gaze on the form and face of this wonderful man. The representations of Jesus which have been preserved present the Great Orator in two very divergent aspects. Some represent Christ as devoid of physical beauty, degradingly hideous, others present a form and face of ideal beauty. The reason for this diversity is evident. It is due to false theological conceptions of the nature of Christ. It is a sad commentary on the proneness of the human mind to invest Christ with an individuality altogether outside of the natural. Some writers of the early church, disregarding the facts of Christ's life sought to invest His form and features with an environment arising in their own minds. The humanity of Christ was not real, said they, or if real, it was so under the control of His God nature that its activity or influence was insignificant, so they depreciated the human that they might exalt the divine. In thus doing they seemed to find confirmation from certain expressions in the Old Testament especially Isaiah's portrayal of a patient and afflicted sufferer, or David's description of a broken and wasted outcast. Had Christ been Greek or Roman no doubt a true likeness would have been taken, for they were keen observers of physiognomy, and in their representations they sought ideals of beauty rather than deformity. But the early church was sorely tried, passing as it did through the furnace of affliction, and saw its Lord through the atmosphere of sor-

row and fancied His visage and form marred more than other men.

“His body,” says Tertullian, “had no human handsomeness, much less any celestial splendor.” Justin Martyr declares that He was entirely devoid of human attractiveness in face or form. Clement of Alexandria not only describes His physical appearance as uninviting, but even repulsive. Origen, in his conception of Christ, seems to be misled by the fact that Christ was low born and describes Him as small in body and deformed, and His only beauty was in His soul and life. It is evident from all these descriptions that the intention is to belittle the human and to exalt the divine nature of Jesus. Their idea was that, if His human qualities were mean and poor the divine work of God in Him would be more evident. He was great not because of His human but His divine element, and so far did they carry this perversion of the nature of our Lord that the likeness of Christ that they have given us is not a man but a monstrosity. To such an extent were these degrading descriptions of Christ carried, that many declared that He who healed the diseases of others was himself smitten with disease. The royal voice that said to the leper “Be thou clean,” was a voice that came from a man afflicted with this most horrible disease.

It was natural that there should be a revolt from these false and shocking representations of the Saviour of men, and that many should go to the other extreme and describe Christ with all the elements of physical beauty. Augustine strongly avers that our Saviour

The de
mi ca
not be
exagger
ted!

of the
Anagor

No one truly loving Christ
can think of a monstrosity!

must have been beautiful in face and form, and delights to apply to Him the words of Psalm XLV., 2, "Thou art fairer than the children of men." Gregory is most eloquent in his description of Christ, and applies the imagery of the Song of Solomon to His bodily appearance. Chrysostom declares that the Heavenly Father poured out on Him in full streams that personal beauty which is distilled only drop by drop upon mortal man. Jerome is even more glowing, and asserts that a flame of fire and starry brightness flashed from His eye, and the majesty of the Godhead showed in His face. But if the orthodox Christian Church was divided in its conception of the personal appearance of Christ, the Christian Gnostics were unanimously in favor of exalting the humanity of Jesus, and from an early age they had in their possession likenesses and images and impressions on coins of the face of Christ, declaring that they were copies of an original likeness made by the order of Pilate. Two of these images still remain, and are interesting as early attempts to represent on metal the features of Jesus. Like the images of Plato, Aristotle and other sages which these half heathen sects consecrated along with the Saviour, they are small and medallion rather than busts. One is of stone and represents the head of Christ, young and beardless, in profile. The other is a kind of medal representing Christ with His hair parted over His forehead and falling to His shoulders.

The early church did not look with much favor upon representations or pictures of Christ, and most

certainly would not be drawn toward pictures coming from heretical sects, yet there were many pictures of Christ in circulation, said to be copies of portraits taken in the days of the apostles. The seventh general council of Constantinople held in the year 754 condemned all pictures of Christ as dangerous, leading to idolatry. These early pictures no doubt exerted great influence upon the production of later artists. It is worthy of attention that these portraits do not give Grecian or Roman features to our Lord. Grecian and Roman art was striking, original, corresponding to the genius of the race, and could never be mistaken for the artistic works of other countries. The Grecian artists delighted to impress strength, beauty, and philosophic contemplation on the face and form. The Roman artist, while he sought to imitate the Greek, yet conveyed upon the canvas the Roman characteristics of head and face, harsh, angular, round, and countenance haughty, stern, and overbearing. The pictures of Christ, although by the pencil of Grecian or Roman artists, were different: in no sense could the expression on the face be said to be Roman or Grecian. It was too spiritual, tender, thoughtful and sympathetic, qualities unknown to ancient artists, or, if known, not appreciated. Such elements were made popular by Christianity. Before her advent, strength and intellectuality were most worshipped. The Grecian artists may have taken their patterns from some early likeness of Jesus, or copied the form and features of some eminent Christian teacher or martyr. But certain it is that the

pictures of Christ in those early days are of an ideal type, resembling no individual, race or nation. The most famous pen-picture of Christ extant is this letter, said to have been written by Publius Lentulus, who had seen Jesus. The letter was written to the Roman Senate, and copies of it were found at an early date:

“There has appeared in our time a man of great virtue; men call Him a great prophet. His own disciples term Him the Son of God. His name is Jesus Christ. He restores the dead to life and cures the sick of all manner of diseases. He is a man of lofty and well proportioned stature, beautiful, having a noble countenance, full of kindness and firmness, so that those who look upon Him, both love and fear Him. He has wavy hair, rather crisp, of a dark brown color, and from the level of the ears curling and crispy and glossy, glittering as it flows down from His shoulders, with a parting in the middle after the manner of the Nazarenes. His forehead is pure, even and smooth, and His face without any spot or wrinkle, but glowing with a delicate flush. His nose and mouth are of faultless beauty. He has an abundant beard and of the same dark hazel color as his hair, not long but forked. His eyes are blue and very bright. He is terrible in rebuke and reproof; calm and loving in admonition; gentle and amiable of tongue in exhortation and teaching; cheerful, but preserving gravity. He has never been seen to laugh, but often to weep. His stature is erect and His hands and limbs beautiful to look upon. In speech He is gravely eloquent and

Understand this!
to be pronounced a forgery!
multitudes may believe it!

reserved and modest, and He is fair among the children of men."

cause The personal appearance of Jesus is not altogether a matter of conjecture. It ought not to be a matter of surprise if the Saviour of Men should have graces of speech and beauty of form. The history of His life and the description of the sacred writers would indicate that He had such endowments. We can gather from history, Scripture, and the natural laws of correspondence, somewhat regarding our Lord's appearance. The form or outline, all other things being equal, corresponds to the inner life. Human beauty is often but the show or blossom of inner perfection. The human body in all its parts is moulded by the inner vitality; the form, by the physical and moral life; the facial expression, by the moral and spiritual. Beauty of thought, purity of sentiment, and harmony of conduct seldom fail to trace their nature on the human countenance. The more universal the elements of mind and soul in activity, the more regular and perfect the form. Now, looking at Christ in the light of these principles, we can make some approach to an accurate description of the Prince of Orators. He was a man in stature, perhaps, above the medium, body well-proportioned, firmly knit, every member flexible, expressive in attitude and graceful in carriage. He derived, from an illustrious line of ancestors, something of the natural endurance of King David, the oratorical expressiveness of Absalom's wondrous beauty. Judging from the rare intellectual force and moral and spiritual fervor of His

stage
action

nature, His head must have been large, harmoniously shaped, with deep, full, high forehead, and lofty coronal region. His hair was wavy, and fell in graceful curls around His neck. His face was well defined, with graven features, and grace of speech circled around His lips. No one could look upon that large, speaking, oratorical eye, and forget its glance: it was so full of spiritual fire. The lines upon the countenance were plainly marked, and revealed the nature of the soul within. No doubt sorrow and sad contemplation were clearly visible, but the grandest lines revealed deep intuitional force, strong personality, and wonderful depths of sympathy and love. It was a face of universal expression, no thought, no spiritual aspiration was absent, and every motion revealed a human and divine majesty.

His garb was simple, and rendered the bloom of His youth more striking. Though a king in the nature of His divine mission, He wore not the royal purple like Herod's courtiers. A prophet by divine ordination, yet He wore not the white ephod of the Levite, nor the long, trailing robes of the sanctimonious Pharisee. Despising earnestly pious show in any form, He did not wear the phylacteries which the priest made so broad. His dress was plain, the ordinary habit of His country. A blue outer robe covered His entire person, and beneath was the seamless tunic of striped texture. Thus clad, He had the freedom and grace of his body, and the blue color of His outer garment must have set forth to good advantage the glow of his complexion.

It is so common to regard our Lord as insignificant of stature and infirm of health, that it is well worth while to consider carefully the real facts of His life. There is not a single fact to prove that Jesus was weak or insignificant of stature; on the contrary, the evidence is the other way. The story of His life shows exceptional physical endurance. If there is any truth in heredity, there was nothing in His lineage to render His stature mean or His vitality poor, since His mother's house was of the line of David, noted for its handsome warriors. Before entrance upon public life as a preacher, His boyhood must have been full of pleasure, free from care and sorrow, and every want of culture supplied by parents, whose love was well manifested in the search for their missing boy, when He sought the company of the learned, while at Jerusalem. If He toiled at the carpenter's bench in His youthful days, such occupation would discipline His physical powers. As He began His public life when He was past thirty, His body must have received its full development. Three years was the duration of His labors, and these were years of joy as well as sorrow. That physical powers, thirty years in ripening and growing firm, should give way during three years of service, even if sorrow did come, is hard to believe. There was nothing in the nature, or condition of the life of Christ to destroy His physical powers, since His manner of life was chaste, regular and obeying in every respect the laws of nature.

His mission was one that usually brings health, since there is a joy in laboring for others. The tem-

per of his mind was evenly balanced. No fretting care could gnaw the health of one who put His trust so supremely in God. The sweetness of His disposition drew every one to Him, and even if, in the course of His oratorical mission, He did now and then have a tilt of words with angry Pharisees or provoking lawyers, He must have enjoyed such, as every true orator does, for He was always victorious. His public life was one of popularity. The common people heard Him gladly, and followed Him, sounding His praises everywhere, and often stood between Him and His enraged enemies. He had enough to eat and drink, and, making allowance for prejudice, hate and exaggeration, the epithet applied to Him by His enemies, a "gluttonous man and a wine-bibber," reveals that He availed Himself of social feasts.

We never read of His being sick but always cheerful. He shunned the cities, and spent the night in the mountain air under the open sky. He was careful not to overtax His vitality, for when He had preached long enough, He never hesitated to leave the multitude abruptly and seek seclusion in some mountain recess, or desert place, or lonely wave-rocked boat. Such was the regularity of His habits, that He offers to the world a model also in this respect. Only during the last two weeks of His life was there sorrow and trial, such as man never experienced. And during this period, He bore Himself like a hero. Without sleep and under the fearful strain of His great passion, He stood calm, dignified and fearless before the Roman governor and before the howling multitude. He re-

ceived with unflinching firmness the cruel lash, and the fierce decision of the multitude, and endured with heroism unparalleled the long, lingering agony of a most painful death.

We have reasons to believe that He who was called the Son of Man must have been perfect even in what may be regarded as purely human elements. It is absurd to speak of an ideal or perfect man as weak in body and insignificant of manner. The Scriptures give no such account of Him, for outside of a few references to His great griefs, more especially to His awful passion and suffering on the cross, found in the prophets, they present a man of most perfect stature and harmonious disposition. He was not a lifeless person feeding on abstract thought or pious meditation, but a man possessing every honorable trait of manhood. Full of vigor, He takes part in all the walks of life, and shares its trials, joys, sorrows and temptations. As the great divine says, "He dwelt among men." He might have said He dwelt in the universe of God, for every nation, race or color, caste or creed, finds something in Him to love.

Every human virtue was so perfect, that He seemed more like a visitor from some happier and more perfect world. He combined in marvelous harmony apparently opposite qualities. He was at once a woman and a man. The tender, devoted, loyal, trusting love of woman;—that love so deep and true and self-forgetful, that it clings to its idol, even after misery has broken the cords of the heart, and vice has rent asunder every hallowed tie. The love that looks, and

hopes, and confides, and will not believe anything bad of the loved one, but trusts, until death reveals the awful blank between her purity and his vice, was blended in silver glory with the sunlight of man's stern, firm, enduring, heroic, strong, intellectual nature, that rides the whirlwind, dares the storm, and faces death with unyielding heroism.

He mingled with men in their business life, but adopted none of their narrow ways and prejudices, to the poor He was poor, and to the rich like one bred in wealth. He was fond of society and yet He often sought the solitude of the desert or the lonely mountain tops. The philosopher could gather truth from His splendid, mystical views of God, and yet a poor widow found the well of life in one of his way-side conversations. There was some mysterious goodness in His looks and manners that drew the universe with all its diverse life to Him. He was indeed a solitary man, not in the sense of seclusion, but in the awful grandeur of His perfect and universal nature. The poor came running to Him, forgetting in His blissful presence all sorrow and tears and poverty, and felt the marvels of the new kingdom, already breaking the hard fetters of cruel money grasps and inhuman lords. Out from the slums of misery and vice, out from the savage dens of cities encrusted with the cobwebs of neglected duty and forgotten love, out from those "Civilized Africas," of the great capitals of man's world, his glory and his shame, came the friendless, the forgotten, the lame of mind and heart and limb, the sad-eyed poor, the haggard, the worn,

the hopeless outcast, the miserable, helpless, fatherless, motherless, homeless crowd of men and women, and flung themselves, with no offering but their misery and their poverty, at the feet of the Sacred Orator to hear His words and receive His blessing. And they did hear and receive. No one ever touched His garments and loved in faith His sacred person in vain. No lone widow ever cast her trembling mite into the deep treasury of His rich love without receiving a blessing. The world came to Him and cast aside its zones of pride and sat at His feet in humble simplicity, and heard His wisdom, forsaking in His cause the rich treasures of secular business. The tax-gatherer forgets his craft, and the fisherman's boat lies on the shore neglected and forlorn, and the nets that once broke with the pearls of the deep, unmended lie in the rude huts. Books of learning, once held sacred, look no longer with open page upon the Nicodemuses and the Sauls of rabbinical fame, for their masters have been drawn by His magnetic oratory.

Some scholars discourse learnedly of the "Elixir of Life," one draught of which will give eternal youth, but hidden in books of learning and crucibles of practice, it has ever eluded the eye and the hand. Though clear and real to the imagination or the reason, it has never borne fruit, but the brain of the scholar and the flesh of the chemist have decayed in sight of, and in reach of perpetual youth; but what the imagination has with daring flight conceived, the history of God's dealing with men has realized, for those who drank of Christ had eternal youth and

eternal life. A healing balm issued from Him that cured the leperous, the sin-stricken, the palsied and the blind. The impression that Jesus produced on the men of His day was that of greatness and superiority, and they were often awed into silence by His look and manner, and the hand that was raised to strike fell in helpless terror. If Christ was insignificant of stature His disciples did not know it, for He was to them a king, fit to lead the armies of Israel, and sway the destinies of the world.

The chief above ten thousand
and and the One altogether
only!



*This is only incidental
and subsidiary!*

CHAPTER VIII.

EXPRESSIONAL; HIS VOICE AND GESTURE.

IT would be interesting and profitable to know to what extent Christ enforced His truths by those powerful agents of oratory, voice and gesture. Did He, like the great orators, charm, electrify and subdue to His will the multitudes which gathered to hear Him by the enchanting melody of a voice rich in vocal intonations? When we read in the lives of the great orators, of the wonderful achievements of the human voice, of its expressive tones, its power to sway the wills and hearts of men, its overwhelming influence to burst open even the latent reservoirs of character, to inflame or calm the passions, to urge men to climb higher mountains of moral purity and spiritual thought, we earnestly ask, if it were true that God sent a messenger to proclaim the highest truth of Heaven, would He not endow that messenger with a perfect voice?

Truth depends much upon the method of its presentation: it cannot fall into the mind of man as rain falls into the hungry soil. It must enter through his senses,—those great avenues of communication, the ear, the eye and mental perception. The voice appeals to the mind through the ear, and gesture through the

eye. Would God, Who has endowed man with these wonderful avenues through which to receive truth, and these still more wonderful instruments for the conveyance of truth, forget to endow His Chief Messenger with expresssional gifts of power? Would He whom prophecy declared would preach the gospel to the poor, smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and slay the wicked with the breath of His lips, be weak of voice and feeble of gesture? David said of Christ long before His appearance among men: "Thou art fairer than the children of men, grace is poured into Thy lips, therefore God has blessed Thee forever."

It is strange how asceticism, so alien from true Christianity, still lives on. There were in the ages gone by men who taught that Christ was contemptible of body and feeble of speech; because our Lord passed through sorrow and persecution, that His bodily appearance must be that of a man bowed down with grief, and His voice deprived of every human grace or charm of utterance. In crushing the man, they thought the God appeared. But God appears more clearly, the more perfect the human. This ascetic spirit still lingers and influences the opinions of many to-day. Such would ignore any attempt to show that our Lord exerted any influence by His grace of body or voice, and would discourage the use of gesture or vocal tones by the preacher of Christianity. But most certainly Jesus made use of such tones and gestures. He who gave directions that even the fragments of loaves that remained after a feast that He Himself had

created should be gathered that nothing might be lost, would be the last to neglect the little elements of persuasion. Unfortunately, in investigations into the expressional gifts of our Lord we are met with serious obstacles.

The Hebrew people among whom our Lord labored were not an æsthetic people like the Greeks. By a hard, literal interpretation of the commandment of Moses they were debarred from making representations or likenesses of anything in Heaven above or in the earth beneath or in the waters under the earth. Hence we find in their writings but few details of bodily appearance, gesture or facial motion. Such a vivid description of personal appearance, is not often to be found in Hebrew literature as the description of the beauty of Absalom: "He was without spot or blemish from his crown to his heel." When the Hebrew writers mention the countenance or voice of a person they never go into details, but give meagre and general characteristics. They were almost destitute of artistic observation. Had Christ been a Greek or a Roman we should not be left in darkness in regard to His expressional gifts. Their keen artistic sense would have perceived every expression of the countenance, and every movement of the hand, and every cadence of the voice. Nevertheless there is sufficient even in the record of the Evangelists to show that Christ made good use of His voice and gesture.

There is enough mention of His voice and attitudes to warrant the opinion that He had a most wonderfully expressive voice, sweet, clear, strong, round and

powerful, and that its tones awakened echoes in the most unresponsive heart. We may be well assured that if His enemies had detected any bodily deformity or weakness of voice, they would have brought it against Him as a proof that He was not the Messiah. They believed that their deliverer would be fairer than the children of men, a mighty warrior, in beauty like his ancestor David, in form of body more perfect than Absalom, most mighty in glory and majesty, who would gird his sword upon his thigh. On many occasions they lay in wait for Christ. Oh! how cruelly they did watch, narrowly, closely, with jealousy in their hearts and cavils in their minds,—watched His every attitude and every word, that they might have wherewith to accuse Him and bring Him to punishment. But they could find nothing wrong, not even in His personal bearing. They could only taunt Him with the humbleness of His occupation and the obscurity of His place of habitation. They were so struck with His wisdom, so amazed by His eloquence, that they never said His voice was weak, or His figure contemptible.

That Jesus had a voice of wonderful power and range is evident from the fact that He daily addressed vast audiences in the open air. The multitude which Christ fed in the desert is estimated by the sacred writers to have been about five thousand. Christ addressed this multitude during the greater portion of the day, only ceasing to preach when the shadows of night had fallen. The number is not given as indicating the numerical size of the audience, but rather

to show how great was the miracle of the loaves and fishes. As this crowd was in a desert place, where Christ had gone to avoid the miracle-seekers, we may be sure that, even though it numbered five thousand, it was a small audience compared with other occasions of Christ's preaching. It requires no ordinary voice to speak distinctly to a crowd of five thousand in the open air.

We have still greater evidence that our Lord's voice must have had ample range and power, for we are told that on many occasions so great was the throng that encircled our Master that He would betake Himself to the seaside, and, entering a boat, command His disciples to row out from the land; and from this boat He would address the people, who stood along the shore or sat upon the sloping bank. Now, why did Christ thus betake Himself to His boat? He did this so often that He must have had some reason for doing so. Perhaps the reason was that He wished to have the freedom of His body and voice, so necessary to expressive speech. On the land surrounded by a dense crowd He could not move or speak with effect, and only those that were near Him could see His motions, since by crowding so closely together the great mass of the people were shut from His view. Out from the shore He could make a pulpit of the boat, and surrounded by water, He was free from pressure or restrictions of any kind, and with his audience in front of Him, every vocal sound and every gesture would be free to make its best impression. Perhaps it was for the same reason that on other occasions He

sought elevated places and spoke from the hills to the people, who assembled at the foot and on the sides of the hills. Addressing the people from elevated places gave Him more freedom, and also enabled his audience to look upon Him as He spoke. But whatever may have been the reason, one thing is clear, it requires great vocal effort to make speech intelligible to so great a multitude. Since Palestine was densely populated, we may estimate the audience on such occasions as numbering more than five thousand. We can safely say that there may have been at times fifty thousand, and yet, in addressing such multitudes for many hours, there is no record which tells that Christ's voice was inadequate to reach any, or grew husky and failed.

The sacred writers, in describing the voice of Jesus in His delivery, make use of words with interchanges which reveal clearly that His voice was not pitched upon a monotonous level. They often declare that He would raise His voice and speak more loudly to the people. Such expressions as "With a loud voice," "speaking with a loud voice," or "speaking with anger" are very significant, especially among a people not bred in elocutionary observation. The very words, signifying to preach or to speak, are interchanged at times for words that mean loud or animated or round, full utterance, to cry aloud, to proclaim like a herald, to make a vigorous outcry. Such expressions as "Jesus stood and cried with a loud voice unto the people," are examples.

His voice was very flexible, and could express every

shade of emotion. It had all the notes of oratorical expression, grave and solemn at times when He foretold the woes that were coming upon the world, full of warning and tender sympathy when He addressed His friends, and burning with indignation when He rebuked His enemies. Such was the peculiarly tender accents of His voice that His friends were drawn to Him by a charm they knew not how to explain. His every tone was so sincere and full of magnetic power. How startled was Mary, when wandering in the garden in the gray dawn of the morning of the resurrection, weeping and crying, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him;" when suddenly that voice, so full of tenderness, so expressive of heart-emotion, the voice she knew so well, the voice of Jesus, her dearest friend, pronounced her name with the sweet melody no other voice could own, "Mary, Mary!" Before He spoke she knew Him not; but who could forget the sound of that marvelous voice? And she turned and said: "Rabboni! Oh, my Master!" Christ's voice was full of pathetic lamentation over the doomed city, the capital of the nation He loved, the once chosen city of Jerusalem. His voice was full of the tender emotion of friendship when, at the grave of His friend, He cried with a loud voice: "Lazarus, come forth!" On that occasion it was said of the Prince of Orators that He wept—"Jesus wept." Could He weep only with His eyes? Was there no sorrow in the voice? Yea, much sorrow; for it is said that "He groaned in spirit and was troubled."

His voice also had the deep, hard notes of denunciation and the double tones of sarcasm. If our Saviour was sincere in His rebuke of hypocrisy, He must have delivered those awful words of denunciation and sarcasm against scribes and Pharisees with bitter, stern circumflex tones, "Woe unto you scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men; for ye neither go in yourselves, nor suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers; therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. For ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. Woe unto you scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Woe unto you, for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful without, but are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness."

The most mysterious quality of our Lord's voice was its strange magnetic influence. No wonder men marvelled and were divided in regard to our Lord's mission and nature, for He spoke as man never spoke in more senses than one. When was it ever witnessed before that the voice of man had such power? What orator's voice ever had the quality to charm a multitude and hold them spellbound for hours during many days? What voice could pronounce words so that demons and foul diseases, and hidden leprosies, and loathsome sins departed from the outraged bodies of

men? What voice so potent in tone as our Saviour's? When it rang out, graves opened to give up their dead, and life entered again the tabernacle of human flesh, and mothers blessed the voice that had such power to bind again the broken cords of love.

With His voice Jesus calmed the raging seas and bade the winds be still. The angry passions of men quailed before its thrilling tones, and hearts long dead in sin awoke upon the threshold of purity and penitence to find forgiveness. The blind heard that golden voice say, "Ephphatha," "be thou opened," and straightway sight returned to the long-time darkened orbs. The lame threw down their crutches and walked in the upright attitudes of men, and poor shaking paralytics took up their beds at the sound of that magnetic voice. The crowd of murderers and robbers led by the arch-traitor, Judas, into the solitude of the Holy Garden, the sacred resting-place of the Son of Man, shuddered and fell backward to the ground, when they heard the thrilling accents of that voice break the deep silence of their murderous thoughts and treacherous hearts, as the Prince of Orators calmly and fearlessly said in answer to their question: "I am He whom ye seek, Jesus of Nazareth."

The gestures of Christ were always natural and enforced the meaning of what He said. They were indicative and dramatic rather than ornamental. He avoided entirely those artificial gestures of the scribes and Pharisees, which they regarded as reverential. The religion of the Jews in our Saviour's day had degenerated from the true religion of Moses and the

prophets. Lifeless ritual had taken the place of divine inspiration and enlightened human thought. It was difficult for human life to assert itself and mount upward with natural wings to its God. The soul of the worshiper was confined and cramped by mechanical gestures and worse than useless forms. No good spiritual act could be properly done unless a man made so many conventional turns toward some sacred place, to the East, to the altar, or to Jerusalem. The hands must be washed so many times and the arms touched exactly in particular spots before one could be clean. In the delivery of truth there were certain pious attitudes that alone could make it efficacious. The Holy Ghost was powerless because He was only spirit. The Pharisees and lawyers had all the piety stored away in broad phylacteries and churchly garments. Vain to agitate reform; vain to appeal to the time when Israel had her prophets who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit of God. Strut, show, long-flowing robes and pious attitudes of the hands and body was the religion of the Pharisees. It was more religious to their minds to cross the hands, and fold the arms, and bend the body, after some set ecclesiastical rule, than to express a thought, or to move a muscle by instantaneous feeling. Such was the day and generation in which Christ came to spread the truth of Heaven through the instrumentality of human speech. If ever an age stood in need of natural born eloquence to guide it, not only into truth but even toward the attainment of natural expression of truth, it was that age. There is, therefore, a very good rea-

son why God chose to regenerate the world and purify religion through eloquence.

The world stood in need of an orator, who catching the fire of God could convey that fire to men, through the channels of human speech. We can, therefore, see in Christ's mission not only that of saving grace but also the uplifting of the forces of expression. Man stands in need not only of regeneration and pardoning influences, but also of the true pattern of worship. It is in vain to have aspirations and feelings after God, if they are deprived of an outlet. The expressional side of religion is as much an object of concern as the receptive side. To know how to worship God and how to impart truth to men, needs a pattern, a guide and a perfect example. Hence there is a reason why Christ spoke and acted as He did in the words, gestures and attitudes of men. We can learn from Him what positions of the body are most reverential and what gestures are most expressive of truth, and we find from a study of His life and works that the natural, spontaneous gestures which accompany vivid thought and strong feeling are more appropriate and reverential than any prearranged ecclesiastical postures, even if ordained by the usage of ages. Besides, no previously arranged gesture is the utterance of sincerity; to be sincere gesture must be the outcome of thought or feeling at the moment of utterance. Prearranged gestures and conventional attitudes may aid the hypocrite to feign religion but are not helpful to the sincere exponent of truth. Priests may tread the chancel with solemn, slow, premeditated steps after the

pattern of some church rule, or mediæval saint, and fold the hands in speechless piety, and sweep the sacred sanctuary with flowing robes, and yet be but miserable sinners and hypocrites. It was because the forms and postures employed in Jewish worship in our Saviour's day were mechanical rather than natural, that hypocrites had such a chance to be regarded as saints, and pious frauds stood in the room of the prophets and sat in the seat of Moses. It was at this mechanical presentation of truth, this hypocritical form, that Jesus uttered His most burning denunciation. The twenty-third chapter of Matthew is a powerful sermon against mechanical worship.

Let us now try to discover what use Christ made of gesture. We find from the sacred narratives that He seldom performed a miracle without using speech or gesture, and generally both. This is very strange, and we are so accustomed to think of Christ as God, and that all His works were the outcome of supernatural power, that we fail to comprehend why He made use of such instrumentalities. Why did Christ, almost without exception, work His cures by words and gestures? In the ninth chapter of Matthew there is an account of several wonderful cures, and in every one of them Christ uses words and gestures. The first is the man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed. After Jesus pronounces the words unto the sick man, "Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thine own house," the man is cured, and, as a proof of his soundness, he carries his bed and enters his house. The next is a woman diseased with an issue of blood

twelve years, who had employed many doctors, but had not been restored. She steals secretly behind Jesus and touches the hem of His garment, with the hope that she may be made whole, and she has a full recovery when Christ turns and looks upon her and says, "Daughter, be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole;" and the woman was made whole from that very hour. Then follows the restoration of the ruler's daughter from the sleep of death. In this case, because the people were unbelieving and mocking, He put them out, and entering, He took her by the hand and the maid arose. After this miracle, two blind men followed Him, crying and saying, "Thou Son of David, have mercy upon us!" He restored their sight with a touch of His hand.

In some cases he used gesture more extensively than in others. At Bethsaida a blind man was brought to Him for healing. It differs from those cases mentioned above in the more extensive use of gesture. Jesus took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village, spat upon his eyes, and then laying His hands upon them, asked if he saw. The man looked at the figures in the distance, and being imperfectly cured as yet, said: "I see men as trees walking." Not until Jesus had laid His hands a second time upon his eyes did he see clearly. A similar cure is related in Mark's Gospel, vii., 32-35. This time the man was deaf and had an impediment in his speech. It is evident that it was the custom of Jesus to place His hands upon the sick when He wished to restore them, for when they brought this man to Him, the people

besought Him that He would lay His hands upon him. "He took him aside from the multitude and putting His fingers into his ears, He spat and touched his tongue; and looking up to Heaven, He sighed and saith unto him 'Ephphatha,' that is, be opened, and straightway his ears were opened and the string of his tongue was loosed and he spake plain." Such cases show that the gestures of Jesus had some part in the restoration. Why He should use more gesture in one case than another it is difficult to explain, unless He wished to impart truth more vividly to the onlookers and the one receiving the blessing of restoration.

There are many other instances of the working of miracles by vocal sounds and gestures which are difficult of explanation unless we regard Jesus as seeking to make the expressional nature of the act also prominent.

As a weapon of oratory Jesus made good use of gesture. He rendered His meaning more clear by expressive movements of His body and indicative motions of His hands. One day, Jesus, with His disciples, stood looking at the magnificent buildings of the Temple. While His disciples were filled with awe and admiration, as the sun glittered on the massive walls and ornaments of the sacred edifice, they were suddenly startled by the motion of their Lord's hand in the direction of the buildings. Pointing toward the Temple, His sad voice uttered the ever-memorable prophecy: "Behold these buildings; verily I say unto you there shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down."

Thus did Jesus make His prophecy more impressive by His gestures. On another occasion His gestures told even more plainly than His words. While He was addressing the people, His mother and His brethren came and stood without, desiring to speak with Him. Then some one said unto Him: "Behold Thy mother and Thy brethren stand without and desire to speak with Thee." But Jesus answered and said unto him: "Who is my mother and who are my brethren?" And that He might make the brotherhood of man more emphatic, He makes good use of the interruption, and stretching forth His hand toward His disciples until it seemed to cover them, He said, "Behold my mother and my brethren, for whosoever shall do the will of my Father Which is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother." A still more impressive scene of dramatic teaching was the washing of the disciples' feet. After supper, Jesus, full of His sacred mission, and knowing that God had made Him Lord and King of things in Heaven and on earth, yet lays aside His garments and girds Himself with a towel, pours water into a basin and proceeds to wash His disciples' feet. The act was symbolical. He taught the great lesson of the Kingdom of Heaven, that dignity in service was the highest office. The whole scene was at every stage a splendid yet a simple lesson in the art of dramatic expression. The solemnity of a Master so glorious and high above every king on the earth, and receiving in full confirmation from God all power in Heaven and on earth, stooping to gird Himself with the implements of a slave, and

to perform for His disciples, vastly inferior in every sense, the office of a servant, must have struck with wonder and persuasive force. "Do you know," said the Master, "why I do this? To teach you the true nature of the kingdom. It is love, not ambition. As I have washed your feet, as I have taken care of the lowliest things of creation, do ye likewise, wash ye one another's feet." So far from avoiding the dramatic way of presenting truth, Jesus declares that He uses this method in order that He might make a deeper impression. There are many other little dramas in which Jesus taught mainly by gesture. The scene in Simon's house, where the woman pours the ointment on the feet of Jesus is a good example.

His countenance also had a world of expression. By a look, by a motion of the eye, He made the sinner quail and deprived His enemies of the power to harm. Every emotion in turn seemed to flash from His eyes, which must have been large and expressive, for even a people so dull to observe such things as the Hebrews, were fascinated by them, and now and then described their motions. Mark describes our Saviour as looking round about on the Pharisees with anger because He was grieved at the hardness of their hearts (Mark iii., 5).

A very impressive gesture made often by Christ was the lifting up of His eyes to Heaven. He could preach an impressive sermon by an encircling glance of the eye. Mark records one of these expressive moments when Christ remained silent and taught by His look only. The occasion was when the young man came

running and kneeled down and asked our Lord what he should do to inherit eternal life. He had kept the commandments but one thing he lacked. The Lord said to him: "Go and sell all your vast possessions and follow me." But sad and hopeless the young man went his way. The sacrifice was too great for him; he was wedded to his riches. It is said that Jesus beholding, or looking upon him earnestly, loved him and was grieved. Then looking around about with a long, penetrating action of the eye and lingering, deliberating motion—such is the meaning of the words—said to His disciples: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God." His disciples were astonished at His words and deliberative action, and were too much awed to ask Him any question. But Jesus perceiving the look of astonishment on their faces which His words and action had produced, said with the emphatic form of repetition He so well and often used: "Children, how hard for them that trust in riches to enter into the Kingdom of God. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God." And they were astonished out of measure, saying: "Who then can be saved?" Jesus did not reply instantly but looking directly into the faces of all with the same long, searching gaze, His eye prophetic-like spoke in advance of His tongue. Jesus looking upon them said: "With men it is impossible, but not with God."

Matthew describes how Christ rebuked the officious saying of Peter by a look of His eye before He had

spoken a word. Another instance which must have been very impressive, or it would not have been recorded, is when Jesus enters the Temple, speaks no word but looks around about on all things and then went out with the twelve to Bethany. His air, look and manner must have been full of meaning, attracting the attention of those present in the Temple, for the sacred writers are usually too condensed to narrate such particulars. On the Mount of Transfiguration we have a very impressive lesson taught by the manner and countenance of Christ. He was transfigured before His disciples, the fashion of His countenance was changed, His whole person breathed so divine and dazzling a radiance that snow and lightning and the gleaming rays of the sun were the only fitting symbols to describe His expression. The emotional nature of Jesus shone in His face and at times almost every feeling in rapid succession could be seen glowing with mysterious beauty. Mark describes one of these transfigurations of mysterious expression. Jesus with the twelve was on His way journeying to Jerusalem, where He would soon enter upon the solemn incidents that led to His crucifixion. He walked before His disciples, sad and solemn with bowed head. There are times in men's lives when the spirit of destiny seems to be nearer and with overwhelming power to take possession of the whole soul; something of this kind comes upon the soul of the Son of Man. A prophetic, brooding spirit of meditation, revealing in mingled suffering and glory the cruel death to which He was going, takes possession of Him and again and again, in sudden yet

lingering flashes, pervades His whole being and gives a new and strange grandeur to every gesture and look. He speaks no word, but quickening His steps He walks alone. As His disciples looked upon Him they perceived the change. The face and form and manner were changed, and His countenance shone like the glory of the transfiguration on the mount, but there was a difference. An obscuring cloud of inexpressible sadness veiled the light, and a stern grandeur sat on the brow, as if the soul by anticipation had come into conflict with the demons of darkness. They were bewildered and terror-stricken, and durst not say anything or ask any questions. They loved their Master and would fain share His great grief, but there was something on His countenance that spoke of awful power, as if He was not only suffering but triumphing over some great calamity. These mysterious transfigurations of expression did not usually produce fear, but reverence, and His friends would bow in humble submission to the majesty before them.

These few references to the expression of emotion on the face and in the eye of the Divine Orator are most remarkable, and indicate that His preaching must have been very impressive since every pause would be rendered solemn by His look and manner. His eyes must have been strongly magnetic for they fastened all with their glance. The look that Jesus gave Peter, when he denied Him thrice, was so marvelous in its results that the world sees it even now, because that look helped to make man's history. Although hundreds of years have passed since Jesus gave that look

mingled with sorrow and stern rebuke, as He passed on to His cruel death, its effect still lives; Peter forgot it not. That look went to his heart and wrought a work that no orator's eye ever accomplished. Peter went out and wept bitterly. That sorrowful eye clung to him years afterwards. In the midst of the temptation, when enemies were on every side, when Peter, sad and weary, seemed to falter, that eye by a strange, mysterious power was there. It seemed to be omnipresent. It was like God's eye and sought to guide and uplift him, and yet it never lost its sad and reproachful expression. By no human power could Peter free himself from that last look of Jesus. It followed him when he went about his duties, when he wept and when he prayed; and when he preached that eye was there, strange though it seemed, forbidding in aspect and awful in its stern expression; that look brought life to Peter's soul. It made a man of Peter, made him an apostle of the living God. Behold what a dramatic look can do, cast by a holy orator. Jesus could disconcert His enemies by a glance of His eye. They feared to look at Him. They could not tell why, and when He turned about and looked on them, directly, searchingly, they trembled exceedingly and felt the invisible world come nearer. Thoughts of the Day of Judgment, of Heaven and Hell and visions of lost souls and condemned hypocrites came flashing through their minds and a dread sense of some impending danger threatening them, awful in magnitude, almost deprived them of reason. They sought to cast it off but in vain; that eye riveted

with its steady gaze. It was not the fascination of an evil eye, its glance was too pure, too spiritual, too full of sympathy to be evil. It was like the omnipotent, omniscient, judicial eye of God.

Sometimes the gestures of Jesus served as pictorial illustrations. Such was the nature of His attitudes when He illustrated the condition of entrance into His kingdom by taking a little child and placing him in the midst of His disciples. Thus drawing the attention of all toward the child, He laid His hands upon its innocent head, and raising His eyes toward the people said: "Behold this child, he is a pattern or type of the New Kingdom; become like such in purity of intention and humbleness of will and you shall see the Kingdom of God." But more often His gestures were wonderfully dramatic. Some of the most powerful scenes of His oratory were those where He spoke but few words and dramatized their meaning by striking gestures. The scene where the woman taken in adultery is brought before Him by the scribes and Pharisees in order to ensnare and bring Him under the condemnation of the law, is a good example. There is nothing in the domain of dramatic oratory to compare with it. It is the most wonderful portrayal in all literature of how hypocrisy, cruel, vindictive spite, savage malignity and murderous desire were outwitted by keenness of intellect, calmness of moral purpose and integrity of spirit, manifested in well-chosen words and fitting gestures.

A woman taken in the act of adultery is brought to our Lord by scribes and Pharisees. They were not

influenced by patriotic motives or zeal for the protection of family morals, but by hatred toward Jesus, because the people revered and honored Him more than they did them. They had for a long time been seeking an opportunity to entangle Him in His works of mercy and teachings of purity. Here they thought at last was a splendid opportunity to cast their net around the youthful prophet. In their crafty minds they conjectured, He can hardly escape. If He refuses to inflict death upon her according to the Mosaic law, He will offend the people, on the other hand, if He does counsel that she should be stoned to death, He will make Himself amenable to Roman law and besides will contradict all His teachings of mercy and forgiveness. With such thoughts in their black minds they came to Jesus dragging the miserable woman, into the precincts of the Temple. Jesus perceived the malignity and craftiness of their hearts and prepared to foil them. "Master, this woman was seized in the very act of adultery. Now, Moses in the law commanded us to stone such; but what sayest Thou about her?" The cynical sneer that played upon their lips as they uttered these words, and the sly glances they exchanged with each other revealed plainly their crafty purpose. They thought they had caught Christ between the engulfing earthquake and the tidal wave. Now we shall see whether all this talk of love and forgiveness and mercy, this fellowship with publicans and sinners, will help Him. He must command this woman to be stoned and thus contradict every merciful act of His life or render Himself liable to the

laws of His nation as one who abrogates the Mosaic commandments. "What sayest Thou about her?"

It was a perilous moment, a trying situation for a prophet, a fearful trial for an orator, but Jesus was equal to the occasion. Not a word escapes His lips; He is too full of indignation at their open violation of every sense of purity and their cruel, shameless conspiracy. He stooped down and with His finger wrote on the ground as though He heard them not. Oh! there was even in that silent gesture enough to show the noble mind of Jesus and His unshaken purpose of mercy. Even as words written in the sand are swept away by wind or rain or by the foot of the traveler, so shall the penitent sinner's misery be blotted out. But they did not understand the symbolism of gesture. They knew of no attitudes that were holy except the ecclesiastical ones of their priesthood, so they became impatient, and jeering at the trembling woman, and flashing hate and cunning glances at Jesus, they cried out more loudly and excitedly: "What sayest Thou? What sayest Thou about her?"

Amidst the din and clamor of their angry voices the Sacred Orator lifted up Himself and looked upon them with that steady, awful, heart-searching eye, and said unto them, solemnly, calmly, those dreadful words of self-judgment, words that revealed that their own foul hearts were rightly read: "Let him that is without sin among you, first cast a stone at her." It was not an abrogation of the Mosaic law, it was rather an admission of its justice. The poor trembling wretch as she heard the awful words, "first cast a

stone at her," every moment expected to be beaten to death. Jesus did not annul the Mosaic commandment, but He brought the law and the offence into a higher court, the court of each individual conscience. To condemn her would be in their own conscience to condemn themselves. Jesus had but looked at them for a moment but that glance was sufficient, they knew that their evil thoughts and adulterous hearts were truly read. Like the still, small voice after the storm and earthquake, the glance and gestures of Jesus penetrated their dark, guilty souls, and the awful words of the prophet of olden times seemed to echo in their ears, "Thou art the man." Ashamed, confused, baffled, they dared not look at Him nor longer remain; Christ gave them an opportunity of retire. He did not care to look at their guilty faces nor into their filthy hearts, so He stooped down again and wrote once more upon the ground. One by one they had slunk away, and Jesus was left alone with the woman. As the last one departed it was like the faint peal of thunder that reveals the subsidence of the storm. There had been a fearful crash threatening destruction, but the bolts had spent themselves in battles with each other. The Pharisees and scribes at the beginning had made an uproar and now they were glad to escape during the calm. When Jesus lifted up Himself and saw none but the woman, He said unto her: "Woman, where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee?" "No man, Lord." Then Jesus solemnly uttered those beautiful words of forgiveness which so many have wrongly interpreted,

because they saw not the glance of His eye, nor heard the explaining tone of His voice. The woman knew by His gesture and inflection of His voice, that He rebuked the sin even in declining to pronounce judgment in the impressive words: "Neither do I pass judgment upon thee, go and sin no more." Is there anything in dramatic literature to equal this simple narrative? Anything in the achievements of spoken eloquence to rival the effect produced by the few striking gestures of our Lord? It stands at once a solitary and unique chapter in the history of eloquence.



*More style without the soul is
for living men but dead*

CHAPTER IX.

HIS ORATORICAL STYLE.

JESUS not only employed the methods of the orator in enforcing His truth, but it would be difficult to find in the speeches of any speaker such a wealth of oratorical expression. His thoughts and words glow with intense fervor; His feelings burn with sympathetic ardor, and figures of speech rise unbidden and flash a noonday heat of persuasion, and in the earnestness of His nature He makes use of every emotional element. At times He is vivacious, animated, brilliant, enthusiastic, and apparently overcome by His feelings, abandons Himself to His subject. On such occasions His sudden outbursts of feelings are overwhelming. The cyclone that sweeps away the startled village unwarned of its approach, the thunderstorm that rises suddenly and sends crash on crash above the heads of terrified men and women, is not so fearful, so swift or so powerful as the flash of indignant retribution and the crash of moral judgment that rushes from His soul kindled at the fire of divine love and justice to break over the heads of terrified sinners.

At other times, when His soul has arisen into heights of spiritual conviction and has been inspired by the moral grandeur of truth, He snatches the fiery

energy of God, expresses Himself in the language of passion and literally fulfils the prophecy of old, "He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked."

The general characteristics of His style may be considered under a few leading heads:

DIRECT ADDRESS:—Jesus makes use of this style very often. It brings the speaker into close sympathy with his audience and impresses with sincerity of purpose. Jesus held the interest of His vast audience by speaking to them personally. Men felt that He was sincere, and that He had them in His mind. Even when He was interrupted by His friends or foes asking questions, He had the graceful accomplishment, never manifested so often and so perfectly by any speaker, of making the very questions illustrations of His discourse, and thus the multitudes were never lost sight of in the individual. His method of always keeping His audience in mind was by such forms of address as conferred upon His listeners the privilege of considering the matter conjointly with Himself. Interrogation was the chief means of keeping up a conversation with His people: "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings?" "Are there not twelve hours in a day?" Very often He puts a series of such questions and answers them Himself: "What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? What went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold they which are gorgeously appareled and live delicately are in kings' courts, But what went ye out for to see? A

prophet? Yea, I say unto you, much more than a prophet," at the same time scanning the faces of His listeners as if he found there the answer which He gives. Sometimes He takes His audience into confidence by asking questions as if they already knew or could at least reason for themselves. At times He commands them, as if there could be no doubt of the truth: "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and that have no more they can do;" "Let your loins be girded about and your lights burning." At other times, inspired by the divine spirit of eloquence and earnest desire for the salvation of His hearers, He makes use of the most powerful oratorical phrases, warns, prohibits, reproves, rebukes and reproaches: "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees! Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and the earth; but how is it ye do not discern this time?" "I tell thee thou shalt not depart thence till thou hast paid the very last mite." "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee."

Jesus in His direct address never forgets the human condition of His hearers, as men and women. He searches their hearts, allows for their infirmities and passions, and often compels them to know and feel that He is their friend and brother, and speaks to them in tones of close sympathy and invitation: "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy-laden and I will give you rest;" "Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

FIGURES OF SPEECH:—The style of Jesus abounds

in figures of speech. His vivid imagination and keen intellect detected instantaneously the relationship and beauty of human and divine things. He was impressed deeply with the great truth, that things in Heaven are known by their likeness to things on earth; hence He speaks often in the poetic language of correspondence. With the eye of the poet, and the mind of the thinker, He sees nature in beauty and relationship. The earthly forms, shapes and existences, if rightly understood, help the earnest soul to conceive of spiritual things. This life is not a useless, passing show, a coffin-gleam, a formless heap of dust; but all things in the vegetable kingdom teach some truth of God, speak some moral virtue, symbolize some spiritual force, and form the links of a golden chain that draws the earthly toward the heavenly by their suggestive types, forms and patterns of what may be. Thus Jesus saw our human world, the fashion of which passeth away; not its true life and spirit, that shall put on another form, the fashion of immortality. Hence Jesus speaks often in figures of relativity, contrast, and correspondence.

CORRESPONDENCE:—"I am the true vine and my Father is the husbandman. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered, and men gather them and cast them into the fire." This is a beautiful example of teaching by correspondence. Just as the branches must remain with the vine in order to

bear fruit, so must the human life abide with the Christ-life; the life of nature shadows forth the spiritual life. Another striking oratorical correspondence is the saying of Christ which many find difficult of explanation, because they do not perceive its oratorical significance, "Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father." Jesus said unto him, "Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the Kingdom of God." Jesus does not say this to chill natural affection, but that He might clearly convey by a striking expression the true nature of death and life. Those who have not received the life of Christ were the same as if they were dead, and they might as well bury the dead; those who had received the Christ-life would better be employed in saving men from worse than human death.

The oratory of Jesus entered the soul of man by many a figure of contrast: "It is written, my house shall be called the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves;" "If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish will he give him a serpent? Or if he ask an egg will he give him a scorpion?" "Whosoever shall drink of this water shall thirst again, but whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst, but the water I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life;" "Labour not for the meat which perisheth but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." Thus powerfully did He teach by energetic figures of contrast.

So truly oratorical was the style of Jesus, that it abounds in examples of every passion that agitates the human heart. He was a perfect man, and possessed every human faculty, and since His mission was to develop character, He would doubtless play upon every key of the human constitution with harmonious and vivid touch. Behold the orator in His wonderful expression of every shade of feeling. Of pathetic eloquence He was a consummate master. A man of keen sensibilities, sympathetic by nature, and living amidst scenes of distress, sorrow and poverty, His heart was easily moved. Besides His mission was one of love and reconciliation. He came to a suffering, warring world, with the olive-branch of peace in one hand and the cup of restoration in the other. His own life plunged in toil, sorrow, and bitter persecution was itself a vivid drama of pathos. When Jesus wept, He mourned deeply; when He sighed, He revealed a heavy heart; when He spoke of sorrow, pity dropped from His lips, and balm melted in His heart. How beautiful is His pathetic wail over the doomed Jerusalem: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem which killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not. Behold your house is left unto you desolate;" or His sorrowful warning to the weeping women who followed Him to His crucifixion: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children;" or His lamentation over the doomed city (Luke XIX., 41-44).

His story of the Prodigal's Return is unsurpassed in pathetic oratory. But while we regard our Saviour's nature as sympathetic and loving, we must not lose sight of His sterner qualities. He was well endowed in every human element, and we shall fail to estimate His work aright, if we overlook the strong side of His manhood. We are so captivated by His gentle, humble, patient qualities, that it appears irreverent to say of Him, that He was ever angry or impatient. But love requires a sword to defend; justice, scales to measure; and patience, a shield to withstand. Oftentimes the most loving and tender natures have strong resistive and combative qualities. This was certainly true of Jesus as appears from His speeches. No orator could be more terrible in denunciation, or scorch with fiercer sarcasm, or invoke the fires of righteous indignation to burn and condemn wickedness in social life, and hypocrisy in the church. "Beware of the scribes which desire to walk in long robes and love greetings in the market-place, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts, which devour widows' houses, and for a show make long prayers; the same shall receive greater damnation. But woe unto you Pharisees, for ye tithe mint and rue, and all manner of herbs, and pass over the judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done and not to have left the other undone." How awful, sarcastic and fierce is this expression: "Woe unto you! scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them. Woe unto you! for ye build the sep-

ulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them." It is hard to reconcile these words with the weak man many have pictured our Lord. He boldly tells them that they and their fathers have slain the prophets, whose blood, from Abel to Zacharias, shall be required at their hands. Such language could not pass unheeded. Sarcasm is bitter and lacerating, and should be used only when the circumstance is so bad that justice calls for it. The use of such language might gain the good-will of the people, who in general like to hear the powers that be, denounced, but it was sure to make those against whom it was directed bitterly hostile. But Christ did not care for the applause of the wicked. Truth must not be sacrificed through dread of raising opposition. It is said that, after the delivery of such sarcasm, the Pharisees and rulers were exceedingly exasperated, and in order to provoke Him still further would vehemently urge Him to say many things. His parable of the Rich Fool is an excellent illustration of denunciatory sarcasm. How much scorn and indignation did Jesus put into a few words: "If I by the power of Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out?" Many of His short sayings owe their strength to the sarcasm they contain, as for example His allusion to the eating of the shew-bread, their reverence for small things, the sanctifying of the altar, rather than God, the cleansing of cups and platters and leaving thoughts foul within, the making of long prayers, sounding trumpets when they give alms, the use of vain repetitions, the wearing of long robes, the desire to be called mas-

ters and fathers, the seeking out of the uppermost seats in the feast-places, and a hundred other foolish things were denounced in sarcastic tones by Jesus.

Though Jesus always maintained a certain elevation and solemnity of tone throughout His discourse, yet He was never stilted or artificial. That awful gravity which fears a ripple on the stream of human playfulness, or a rill of homely illustration, or the smiling face of wit and humor, derives no authority from His style of eloquence. He spoke as His feelings moved Him, and made use of any illustration, simple or elevated, that rose before His eyes, or in His mind. He did not care if the fastidious took offence. Even if He spoke of salt, mustard, leaven, candles, bread, eggs, serpents, or even the various parts of the human body, under His touch all became divine and served to wing truth with conviction. It will startle some, who have not studied the oratorical style of this great preacher, to learn that He even made use of humor and wit to drive home His truths. "Whereunto shall I liken the men of this generation: they are like unto children sitting in the market-place and calling one to another and saying, we have piped unto you and ye have not danced, we have mourned unto you and ye have not wept, for John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine and ye say he hath a devil, the Son of Man is come, eating and drinking, and ye say, behold a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners, but wisdom is justified of all her children." What a ludicrous picture this illustration presents to the mind. Children

quarreling because men pay no attention to their childish music or their feigned sorrow. The objections and criticisms of the Pharisees against Jesus were even more childish, for it was evident that they were so weak of intellect, they could not see the plain inconsistency of their fault-finding; since they objected to John because he did not eat and drink and to Christ because He did. Such people were a miserable set of childish pipers, they sound the music of carping criticism to any note that suited their purpose. His audience would readily see the wit and humor of the allusion, for they were well acquainted with the habits of these musical children, piping in the market-place. "And which of you by taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?" Withdraw for a moment that reverence with which we invest the Scripture from this saying, and we shall find it wit. Imagine a puny dwarf, or a man short of stature, fretting and fuming because he is small of stature, and saying, "Oh! how I wish I were taller. If I could only by thinking and stretching gain a few inches more how happy I would be." "When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, 'There cometh a shower;' and so it is. And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, 'There will be heat;' and it cometh to pass. Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but how is it ye do not discern this time?" There is sarcastic wit in this expression. It represents a class of contemptible people who search the heavens and the earth for storms that are away, and touch but little the life of man, but are so lacking in moral earnestness that they

can see not the much larger signs of approaching moral dissolution. His wit often shone brightly in His replies to the arguments of His opponents. His audience must have smiled with approval when they saw the sharp thrust or sarcastic turn by which His opponents were defeated. His reply to the Pharisees when they declared that He cast out demons by the power of Beelzebub: "If I by the power of Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out," shows a keen wit, ready to meet every dart of the enemy and turn upon them the ridicule of their foolish inconsistency. He sometimes indulged in humor even of a playful kind. What could be more full of mirthful association than His picture of the importunate friend who, having nothing in his own cupboard to draw from, to satisfy the hunger of a midnight visitor, runs hastily to a neighbor's house and keeps knocking at his door, and begs in piteous tones the loan of a few loaves, while the neighbor, angry at the disturber of his sleep, growls from his bed: "Trouble me not, the door is now shut and my children are with me in bed." There is danger in the use of humor and wit, lest religious truth, under the diction of the trifle and buffoon, lose its reverence and dignity. The example of Jesus in this regard is always a safe guide.

VERBAL EXPRESSION:—Not only did Jesus make use of figures of speech, but even the words and their arrangement were of an oratorical nature. Simple words full of emotional association were combined into pointed phraseology: "Blessed are the poor in spirit,

for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven;" "Ye are the salt of the earth;" "The light of the world;" "A city set on a hill cannot be hid;" "The whole need not a physician but they that are sick;" "Where your treasure is there will your heart be also;" "No man can serve two masters;" "Judge not that ye be not judged;" "Give not that which is holy to the dogs, cast not your pearls before swine." He often uses emotional words to make His meaning more impressive and solemn: "Verily, verily I say unto you!" "Woe, woe unto you scribes and Pharisees!" "Behold the hour draweth nigh, yea, is even now at hand;" "Harken unto me;" "He that hath ears to hear let him hear;" "How long, oh ye simple ones!" "Why are ye so fearful, O ye of little faith." Such language indicates sincerity of purpose and clear conviction, and is very persuasive. The sincere orator, whose diction truly represents his emotion, never fails to win the heart, while the insincere and labored speaker hesitates, and seldom makes use of soul-language.

STRUCTURE:—His method of arranging words in sentences indicates a mind keen and clear of thought. All His sentences have a wonderful finish. The epigrammatic or antithetic style of expressing thought demands the utmost attention to the detail of structure and a minute knowledge of the force of words. And yet the main body of His sermons is made up of just such short, pithy sentences. This method of expressing thought is very effectual if properly delivered. Such sentences must be delivered slowly, with swelling voice and marked emphasis, or they will be

lost because of their brevity. The human mind is not capable of instantaneously grasping the meaning of such sentences when many are delivered rapidly in the same address; hence, we have every reason to suppose that the elocution of our Lord was as finished as His sentences. The beautiful structure of His discourses reveals careful attention to matters of style deemed of little importance by many of His followers. Because His style is simple, some think our Lord was careless of details of structure; but the best proof of art is in the concealment. That His style was simple and adapted to reach even the humble people reveals a mind of keen discrimination. His sentences were like polished arrows that enter the flesh and stick forever. Who could forget such striking sentences as: "Enter ye in at the strait gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction;" "Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves;" "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?" Whence did Jesus derive this rare power of coining expressive antithetical sentences? We have no reliable information of His early years of preparation; but that He had early a thirst for knowledge and oral discussion is evident from His conversation with the learned rabbis of the Temple, when He was a boy of twelve. As His desire to become a public speaker early took possession of Him, doubtless every acquirement of knowledge and every hour of thought would be tinged more or less with the methods of expression.

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We find also in the structure and finish of our Lord's discourses, that His mind must have been keenly poetic or oratorical since His sentences are symmetrical. Rhythmic sentences are beautiful and impressive in their solemn flow, and enter the human heart in waves of persuasion. The Psalms of David, and Proverbs owe their marvelous hold on the hearts of men to their exquisite rhythmic parallelism or symmetry. The strains of Jeremiah and Isaiah for the same reason will never die. The symmetrical structure was characteristic of sacred eloquence to such a degree that it might be said to be the method by which the Holy Spirit revealed the truths of Jehovah, for the higher the inspiration the more frequent and perfect the symmetry. Even the secular orator, when inspired by his subject, his heart and mind aflame with truth, unconsciously falls into this method. It is the garb of high feeling and poetic thought.

“Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.” The frequent use of symmetrical periods by our Lord is another evidence of His care for the structure of His discourses. And surely since He, of all preachers, might have dispensed with oratorical aids, He must have had a purpose in thus seeking the most appropriate words and

the most finished style. His purpose was to set an example for all time. Oratory depends so much upon inspirational moods that it must approach very near to divine speech. The words which the old prophets declared that God uttered through them are words of oratorical parallelism. Such structure is solemn, weighty, and befits the dignity of divine utterance, and cannot fail to impress the hearer.

Another element of impressiveness in our Lord's style was His facility of emphatic repetition or amplification. He frequently holds His thoughts before the minds of His audience by emphatic enumeration of the same facts expressed in similar terms. This is a very vivid form of expression, and since it keeps the details for a longer time before the mind, renders truth more clear and impressive: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

Still more remarkable, however, is His power of oratorical concentration. Energy and vehemence of utterance naturally seeks precision and conciseness of construction. In one word or phrase, our Lord often expressed a universe of truth. There is much practical wisdom concentrated in His proverbial sayings: "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick;" "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country." Libraries of theological discussion are covered by His spicy retorts: "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath;" "Ye

do err greatly, not knowing the Scriptures;" "Every plant which my Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up;" "Let them alone, they be blind leaders of the blind, and if the blind lead the blind both shall fall into the ditch." The Lord's Prayer is an epitome of all the wants of the world.



CHAPTER X.

GENERAL METHODS OF HIS ORATORY.

WE have learned how well our Lord was gifted for His work as a preacher, possessing every oratorical element in harmonious combination, a voice of excellent compass, a body well proportioned, gestures of dramatic power, a face of wonderful expressiveness and attractive beauty, language choice and beautiful, and, above all, a mind unsurpassed in intellectual endowments. We have seen how a knowledge of the oratorical characteristics of our Lord is a great help toward interpreting and forming correct views of our Lord's mission. We now come to consider a question of equal importance. How did our Lord use His wonderful gifts in His efforts to regenerate men by preaching? The importance of such a question is evident if we clearly recognize the tremendous work preaching was to accomplish, and in considering such a subject we shall discover the necessity for a pattern of expression, as well as of faith, an example of the method, as well as of the substance. Christ's mission, as the prophets proclaimed, and as He Himself declared, was to manifest God to man, and to develop manhood by the power of expression. How did He accomplish this? As the Son of Man, He preached to men as a man. He knew what was in man and

He sought to develop true manhood. He recognized that there must be a point of contact between the human and the divine, a place where the waters of human and spiritual influence meet and flow together. He perceived that every truth of revelation or of discovery, of man or God stands in relation to human and divine character. Such truths must be true eternally in divine character and capable of human measurement according to human understanding. Man in order to understand divine truth must have faculties capable of receiving divine truth. There is a union or meeting place of divine and human influences. The image of God in man is that union, and God can make Himself known to that image. Jesus recognized the human necessity for communication; that He might manifest God to man He was made Logos or speech. We now see the reason why Jesus often called Himself the Son of Man. He wished to impress upon all who heard Him that He was a pattern of all that man should be, the type-life and ideal expression, the truth and the expression of the truth. "As Son of Man," He would say, "I will live, speak and worship with you. If you would know the true man-life in substance, mark what I do and what I say." As Son of Man He addressed men, and sought to develop their manhood into the high elevation of His own, and as an instrument for that purpose He made use of soul forces uttered in human language. His perfect soul declaring itself through thought, gesture, look, voice and spoken word would affect the imperfect souls of men, draw out latent qualities,

strengthen weak ones, and promote harmony and power. Hence we see the necessity of His perfect manhood and perfect expression, this necessity was met in His nature as the divine Logos or Eloquent One.

His first means of achieving His mission, therefore, would be to appeal to every element in the human constitution. His method of developing human character is the first lesson He gives to His ministers. He appeals to every faculty of the soul. Hear Him ask the reason to unfold itself in His wonderful question: "What man is there of you whom if his son ask bread will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish will he give him a serpent? If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good gifts to them that ask Him." And how vivid His appeals to practical reason: "What king going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?" Again and again He appeals to the moral faculties, to the sense of right and wrong: "Did not Moses give you the law and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?"

He strives to develop the sentiment of worship by reflection upon the true methods of adoring God: "When thou prayest thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of streets that they may be seen of men. But thou when thou prayest enter into

thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father in secret;" "But when ye pray use not vain repetitions as the heathen, for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking." How successfully He appeals in many instances to the instincts and propensities. How eloquently He draws the attention of those who love this life, to the superiority of the future life in the expressions: "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it;" "He that believeth on me shall never die;" "This is the true life, to know Thee the only true God."

Fear is addressed in His startling words, "Fear not those who kill the body, but rather He that hath power to cast both body and soul into Hell." He warns the daughters of Jerusalem to weep not for Him but for themselves, because of the woes that are coming upon the earth. All His prophecies and warnings are appeals to the instinct of fear. His magnificent description of the Day of Judgment, of the coming of the Son of Man, of the real ending of the world, when there shall be dreadful portents in heaven and earth, perplexity of nations, the sun and moon darkened, men shall call upon the mountains to cover them. His pictures of future punishment are the most thrilling appeals to the instinct of fear to be found in any language. Every prudential motive or reason is stirred to turn the sinner toward virtue and immortality. The love of immortality receives much encouragement in the oratorical expressions: "I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth on me shall never die;" "This day shalt thou

be with me in Paradise;" "In my Father's house are many mansions."

Hope plays an inspiring part in His teaching of the truth: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled;" "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." The beatitudes are all appeals to hope. In the darkest hour of grief, and the most despondent situation in life, Christ sees the bright side. His oratory is always cheerful, like a lamp that, although surrounded by darkness, sees only its own glorious flame. Love of reward and fear of punishment, as powerful human motives, are not passed lightly by in our Saviour's oratory. "He that loseth lands, houses, life and children for the sake of truth, shall in no wise lose his reward." Unto the peacemakers shall be given the Kingdom of Heaven, to gain which we have only to ask, seek and knock. If we seek first the Kingdom of Heaven, all material blessings, riches, honor and prosperity will be showered upon us. Love and charity will cover a multitude of sins. And he that giveth in secret shall be rewarded openly. The sacrifice of all worldly pleasure, and even life itself, shall obtain the highest spiritual blessings.

He seeks to make men better by frequent appeals to their imagination. We need hardly give examples, for every figure of speech is an appeal to the poetic nature in man. What shall we say of this wonderful method of preaching? His hearers could not grow weary, there was such a variety. No danger of one-sided development, since all human faculties were fed. Oh! that

the preaching of His ministers had more of His style and method, more application of truth to the nature of man. If preaching is designed to develop manhood in harmony and power, surely that style which exercises every faculty of heart and intellect should be employed.

Such was the preaching of Jesus. His aim was to make men think, and hence He very often put His truth in the form of questions: "But what went ye out into the wilderness to see? a reed shaken by the wind? But what went ye out for to see? a man clothed in soft raiment? Behold they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what went ye out for to see? a prophet?" "If Christ is the Son of David, how is it that David calls Him Lord?" An unreasoning faith He never taught; an unthinking superstition He sought by every means to destroy.

Men, if they wish to develop harmoniously, must in a certain sense be their own preachers, reproving and rebuking what is bad and approving and nourishing what is good in themselves. Nothing shows more fully how well Jesus understood human nature than His method of appealing to ordinary human experience to justify His moral truths. Such a method made His teachings intensely practical. Men were made to sit in judgment upon their own conduct.

What an arrow-force there is in such appeals to business sagacity as the following: "Which of you intending to build a tower sitteth not down first and counteth the cost, whether he hath sufficient to finish it;" "Thou oughtest, therefore, to have put my

money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received my own with usury." Such appeals are strong and cannot be cast aside without a pang of condemning conscience, for we should not act inconsistently. Surely more zeal should be exerted in spiritual than in earthly matters. This practice imparted to His style of eloquence great variety, and could not fail to interest. There are some who despise this homely method, and even think it beneath the dignity of sacred eloquence to use such humble illustrations. But dignified dulness is something more deadening in its effects than awakening vulgarity. It is well sometimes to jump under rather than to remain on a high horse. Stilted eloquence is not persuasive. What a relief to an audience to hear some simple incident in every-day life, made to illustrate truth dear to the human heart. The method of Jesus' preaching and His deep insight into human nature could hardly be more clearly shown than by the way He appeals to every part of the human intellect. He submits His truths to the lower courts of intellect, logic, and human experience, but He does not leave them there. On the contrary, He recognizes a much higher court whose judgment is final—the court of spiritual intuition. Appeal to human intuition is a favorite method with our Lord. He does not argue, but presents truth in its native simplicity and wins assent. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;" He gives no proof that they shall see God, for it is evident to the spiritual sense of fitness that they shall; just as a straight line is the shortest distance between

two points, or that a whole is greater than any one of its parts, is self-evident truth to the mathematician. "I and my Father are one,"—a very difficult proposition to prove, even when we employ human logic, but easy of solution by the recognition of moral oneness, as recognized by spiritual intuition. Of course this appeal to moral and spiritual intuition would only prove effectual in minds spiritually endowed, especially when deep truths were set forth. The ordinary mind is not spiritual enough to fully grasp intuitional truths. Thus we find many who did not understand Him, and to these He addressed the rebuke contained in the famous utterance: "If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you Heavenly things?" There is a clear lesson contained in these words for all preachers who would follow the Lord's oratorical methods. Many of the truths which revelation gives are not self-evident to the untrained spiritual mind, yet a minister must not shrink from preaching such truths. It will never do to leave these deep truths unuttered, and to feed the flock only with the simple things that can be seen and handled. The preacher is a revelator, the Holy Spirit is with him, and the gleams of heavenly truth that come to him he must declare even if he finds no receptivity in ordinary minds.

MAKES USE OF EVERY OCCASION:—Another characteristic of His oratory is His happy faculty of making use of every occasion to enforce or illustrate some principles of His kingdom. Nowhere in the history of teaching can we find genius and tact so ready and

capable to turn every incident to account. He who would spread his truths by the power of eloquence must try to emulate the Prince of Orators in this most efficient method. His enemies were puzzled and defeated, His friends amazed, sinners confounded, by His skilful use of an incident, a question, or a turn in an argument. He taught a lesson of humble giving, from the incident of the poor widow casting her mite into the treasury. The Pharisees and Jewish lords, clad in their flowing garments, swept proudly into the Temple, and, with much ostentation and stately carriage of body, flung their coins into the trumpet of the treasury. Christ, standing by, saw a poor woman steal timidly in and drop her mite, which made no noise as it fell among the rich gifts. "This woman," said Jesus, "has given more than all the rich men, for it is not the sum but the motive of the gift; they have given of their abundance, but she of her penury has cast in all the living that she hath." Could any truth be more graphically portrayed than by our Saviour's gesture and language, as He thus drew all eyes toward the strut and show on the one side and the utter humility on the other. Two brothers were quarrelling about an inheritance,—a very frequent source of quarrel,—and one came to Jesus, interrupting Him in His discourse, and said: "Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me." Jesus was indignant at the man's presumption and lack of moral perception, and rather sternly said: "Man, who made me judge or divider over you?" But He did not allow

the incident to pass by without teaching a lesson: "Beware of covetousness, for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Then He uttered that awful denunciation against the accumulation of unsanctified riches, the parable of the Rich Fool, and taught that it is better to be poor in material wealth, and rich toward God. Every incident, no matter how humble, contained a lesson to the eye of Jesus. The sower as he went forth to sow, cast not only corn, but spiritual seed. The multitudes coming to hear Him were like a harvest waiting for the Divine Reaper. The fowls of the air, the lilies of the field, were sermons of God's loving care. A barren fig-tree standing on the wayside becomes a lesson of retribution for unfruitful bearing. Spiritual thrift is taught by money given out at intervals. And a net of fish suggests the Kingdom of Heaven. Fishermen may toil all night catching nothing, and in the gray of the morning Christ declares they shall be fishers of men. Such common articles as salt, bread, candles, stones, illustrate spiritual truth. The sun, moon and stars are not forgotten, and even the door and the sheepfold are made symbols of the Christ. Such a method may be despised by some, but it rendered Christ's preaching practical; men could not get away from such eloquence, since the lesson was before them they were bound to take it.

CHAPTER XI.

GENERAL METHODS OF HIS ORATORY (CONTINUED).

THERE are two great ways of presenting truth, in metaphysical and logical garb, or in poetic and imaginative intuition. The first is the philosopher's, the second is the poet's and orator's. Truth is just as true presented by Shakespeare as by Kant, but truth is more persuasive in Shakespeare's style, because dipped in the fountain of emotion and imagination, whence well up the life-springs of action. The orator should combine both methods with a prevalence of the poetic, but in no case should his discourses be expressed in abstract terms, for such cannot thrill an audience.

There was a dignity and an elevation in our Lord's preaching which held the interest of all who heard Him. He followed the poetic and original methods of presenting truth. Although He often made use of humble illustrations, yet His elevation of manner imparted dignity and respect to all He said. He knew how to vary His discourse by the use of such simple illustrations, but when His subject called for poetic and sublime expression His was a master-tongue. Never in the annals of eloquence have so many great subjects been treated with such an elevation of tone

and appropriate imagery. His manner was intensely sublime when addressing the vast multitudes that came to hear Him. Inspired by a lofty conception of His mission His language and His ideas were clothed with power, and illustrations and images burned with volcanic intensity. As an ambassador from God His themes were of the highest possible elevation, and He spoke in language correspondingly magnificent. The most vital questions of the soul, the deep mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, the ways of divine Providence, the hidden glory of His own nature, were subjects demanding an elevation of treatment which He alone could give. Mark with what sublime power He utters the awful truths of Heaven and Hell. To speak of retribution, reward and punishment having elements of terror, and urge them upon mankind with impressive sublimity is no easy task. The step from the sublime to the ridiculous may easily be taken when preaching upon such topics. How often do ministers preach on the Day of Judgment and future punishment in such a strain that sensitive minds are shocked and the Gospel of the Kingdom suffers. Jesus could handle such themes with most impressive eloquence. Under His sublime diction, His glowing contrasts of truth, both the severity and mercy of God appeared in even scale of justice and love. In the utterance of prophecy our Lord ascends the height of sublimity. We read His awe-inspiring prophecies in regard to the fate of Jerusalem with a shudder. The imagery in which these prophecies are set forth; wars and commotions, the rising of nation against na-

tion and kingdom against kingdom, earthquakes, famines, pestilence and fearful sights, and great signs from heaven, is in keeping with the awful nature of the event and strikes the soul with terror. No orator could depict in a few words so many stupendous events, and make such concise yet graphic description of the history of ages. It would be impossible to describe danger and utter desolation more vividly than our Lord pictures in a few sentences the awful wreck of the Jewish nation at the fall of Jerusalem (Luke XXI., 20-24). His description of the coming of the Son of Man in His glory is grandly spoken, and must have struck His hearers with wonder and fear. Each stage in the scene is sublimely told. The Son of Man, coming in the clouds with great glory and His holy angels with Him, gathers the people together and divides them as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats,—those who have done good and those who have done evil,—and declares their doom in words of grand simplicity: “These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.” With such diction Jesus made His truths attractive to men. They could not fail to be interested in such sublime subjects. The human soul craves for the heroic. It is true that there is danger in handling such themes, lest the audience should be inferior to the dignity of the subject, yet the preacher must follow our Lord’s example and bring such themes before them. The preacher in order to be effective must be able to range through all styles of speaking. Nothing wearies so much as monotony. Jesus understood

the human heart well, and spoke to its every throb. The desire for the sublime, original and imaginative is not to be lightly treated. It is as much superior to the commonplace or frivolous as the sunlight is to the rays of a candle. The heroic in human nature, if properly addressed, has a lasting influence upon the development of character. As Jesus lived in the midst of dangers He made frequent appeals to the heroic nature of man: "strive to enter;" "struggle;" "knock and it shall be opened;" "seek and ye shall find;" "He that shall endure to the end shall be saved." His kingdom was to be peopled by men of heroic qualities. He did not come to send peace on the earth but a sword. The service of the kingdom was not to be easy and free from trouble but was to be a warfare, and its subjects should go on from victory to victory. With such appeals His sermons abound and stir the hearts of the people.

PARABLES:—We come now to consider a method of uttering truth which is peculiarly our Lord's—the parable. As Niagara is the most remarkable waterfall in the scenery of this world, so the parable stands out in the preaching of Christ, unique and overshadowing every other method. The prophets of the old dispensation sometimes made use of parables, as Isaiah's story of the vineyard, Nathan's parable of the rich man sparing his own flock and slaying the poor man's ewe lamb to feed the wayfarer, or Jotham's fable of the trees electing a king, or Ezekiel's narrative of the eagles and the twig of cedar. But nowhere in the kingdom of eloquence do we find such

consummate skill in the use of the parable in enjoining and illustrating truths as in the sermons of Christ. In His hands the parable reaches its zenith and terminates. The apostles and followers of Christ fail in their imitations of His parables. John, the most imaginative of the apostles, in the Apocalypse appeals to the poetic instincts by vivid pictorial imagery, but in a different manner from the imagery of the parable. Some of the Christian fathers, especially the Shepherd of Hermas, attempted the parable but did not realize its true form. Many authors in our day by allegorical stories, fables, pen-pictures, reveal the spirit of the parable, but not its form. The parable is the most impressive and concise way of expressing truth. It is like the shell of the mollusk; it protects and preserves the truth and hands it down to future ages intact in form and spirit. It presents in a few words the most stupendous truths, dramatizes the history of the world in a few lines. Christ's parables put the truths of His kingdom in all their various aspects in concrete and particular. What the philosopher would take page on page to unfold, and then leave full of obscurity, Christ declares in a short, vivid picture never to be forgotten. How grandly clear and beautiful is the origin of the kingdom foretold in the parable of The Sower, or its development illustrated by the growth of a grain of mustard seed, or the action of leaven in the formation of bread. How impressively are the duties of the kingdom brought out in the parable of the Ten Virgins and the Master of the Vineyard? Metaphysical discussion might go

on forever without presenting God's love so clearly as the imagery of the Prodigal Son, or the extent of His forgiving so well as in the picture of the Two Debtors. In the illustration of the higher truths of the spiritual life, Christ was even more successful. Pages of logical philosophy could not present the relation of the life of the human soul to the Christ-life so vividly as the parable of the Vine and the Branches. The exposition of the Trinity given by dogmatic theology is full of inconsistencies and stumbling-blocks compared with the wonderful utterances of our Lord: "I and my Father are one, I am in the Father and ye are in me and I in you." The nature of divine and human fellowship is well expressed in the illustration of the difference between a friend and a servant: "Henceforth I call ye not servants, but friends, for the servant knoweth not what his master doeth." There was not a truth of His kingdom, or a moral and spiritual relation, or a duty of life but what Christ made it clear and persuasive by some illustration, parable, or figure of speech. And whoever would be successful in arousing men to better thoughts and actions must follow His example. If our Lord took such care to dress His thoughts in an attractive garb, surely His preachers cannot afford to neglect such matters. If we collect and study the comparisons, illustrations, parables, and stories, which occur in the records of our Lord's discourses, we shall discover how great was His genius in this direction. His mind was alive to the perception of the correspondence that runs through external nature and human life. He

was deeply impressed with the great truth, that things on the earth are analogous to spiritual truths. Things in Heaven are known by their likeness to things on earth. Hence we find this Prince of Orators selecting from external nature and human life some of the most impressive illustrations of His truth. The truths of the gospel would resemble the truths of nature, for both are from the same hand. If we accept John's definition of the mission of Christ as implied in the term Logos, it was of speech not only in His work of preaching, but in His acts of creation. In the beginning the Logos was with God and by Him were all things made. Christ found many analogies between the natural and spiritual kingdoms, because He was Heir of both kingdoms.

It may be said truly, that it requires high mental or poetic inspiration to detect the analogy between the work of nature and revelation. Poets of high imaginative power ravish the heart with their beautiful presentation of truth in the language of correspondence. The most popular hymns in the English language owe their enchanting melody to the presence of the same element:

“Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee;”

“Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear.
It is not night if Thou be near.”

In His use of poetic illustrations, our Lord never sacrifices truth for effect, all His comparisons are to make the truth more luminous or impressive. He

seldom rises to the sublime imagery of the Psalms of David or the prophets, and in this respect He is even surpassed by the oratory of some of His disciples. The Apocalypse by the apostle John rises to the most exuberant and wildest flights of poetic analogy. Christ's analogies, comparisons drawn from human life in all its various forms of activity, present truth with transparent clearness, as: "No man putteth a piece of new cloth on an old garment." Such comparisons not only present truth to the common-sense of men but render it more vivid. Instead of saying in a dry manner that spiritual truth is hard to comprehend, He uses a very impressive illustration: "The wind bloweth where it listeth. Thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth, so is everyone that is born of the spirit." He avoids general exhortations and strikes the nail on the head: "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?" "I am not come to bring peace on the earth but a sword." How strikingly He forbids the preaching of spiritual truth too high for coarse intellects to understand: "Give not that which is holy to dogs, cast not your pearls before swine." There is an important lesson to those who would be good preachers taught by our Lord in His frequent use of illustrations, pictures of the imagination and parables. Most certainly He would not have resorted to this method unless He had recognized that it best met the needs of the human heart and understanding. No orator ever had such vivid insight into the hearts of men. Often

did men wonderingly exclaim: "He reads the very thoughts of men." His example of thus dressing truth must be of the highest importance. He knew that truth in order to reach the human heart must don the garb of persuasion. The more faculties interested and stimulated, the nearer persuasion. Not only should the intellect be convinced but the emotive and imaginative nature should burn with activity. Our Lord had two things in view, the conviction of the intellect and the awakening of the will or soul-action. His illustrations served not only to make His discourses interesting, but also to elucidate, explain and arouse soul-qualities. He had, to a remarkable degree, the power of picture-painting, of presenting the truth in the kindergarten fashion. Some are so struck with the familiar illustrations and simplicity of our Lord's discourses that they seek to imitate His simplicity, but err in their interpretation of what constitutes simplicity. Some think they are following the simple methods of Christ when they translate His graphic pictures into abstract propositions and prosaic expressions. Such gather a few commonplace thoughts and dress them in stale phraseology and call it simplicity. It is simplicity but not Christ's method of genius, it is the simplicity of an empty mind and sluggish imagination.

We learn also that our Lord chose the most familiar illustrations, such as most appropriately set forth truth by an evident analogy. His aim was simply to instruct and impress without being either vulgar or ornate. His keen insight into human nature readily saw the necessity of frequent illustration, since truth must not

only be imparted to the intellect, but must be made to bring forth practical results. Illustration is not only the clearest way of presenting truth, but it also influences the will. The parable of the Good Samaritan who binds up the wounds of the man beaten by robbers not only elucidates true benevolence but also enforces the necessity of becoming like the Samaritan.



CHAPTER XII.

PUBLIC DISCOURSES AND CIRCUIT OF HIS PREACHING.

THE circuit of our Lord's preaching embraced Judea, Galilee and the borders of neighboring countries. The duration was not more than three years; yet in that time He delivered sermons unsurpassed in effect, since they have changed for all time the nature of history, and have exalted the life and destiny of man. The sermons delivered during this period, range through every style, and cover every phase of the soul's life, and every duty of man. There are sermons on faith, love, providential care, watchfulness, worship, Heaven, Hell, hypocrisy; on the conditions for entering into the New Kingdom, besides innumerable private discourses in explanation of difficult questions and problems of religion. None of these discourses are preserved in full, the nearest approach to a full report is the Sermon on the Mount. The sermons range through every variety of style, denunciatory, reverential, expository, polemical, retributive and prophetic. We have a good example of eulogistic eloquence in His description of John the Baptist (Matt. XI., 7-12). Nothing could be more scathing than His denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees (Matt. XXIII). What preacher ever uttered such stern and fiery denunciations against hypocrisy to com-

pare with the sarcastic eloquence found in Luke XI. ? The prophetic solemnity of our Lord's discourses may be learned from His sermon on the signs of the coming of the Son of Man and the dissolution of all things. There is nothing to compare with these discourses for solemnity and grandeur. We cannot read them without feelings of elevation and dread (Matt. XXIV. and XXV., Luke XXI. and Mark XIII.). The sermon on conditions for entrance to the Kingdom of Heaven is a model of simplicity of diction and beauty of illustration (Matt. XVIII.). Examples of His deep mystical and spiritual eloquence may be found in the fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth chapters of John. His love sermons, in which He sets forth His relationship to His Father and to His disciples, are unique. Nothing like them can be found in the discourses of other sacred orators (John XIV., XV., XVI., XVII.). These discourses of our Saviour were delivered, many of them, to very large audiences. The effect which they produced was very marked. They raised opposition among the supporters of the degenerate religion of the Jews—the Pharisees, lawyers and others—but the common people heard Him gladly and followed Him. The presence of such multitudes, enthusiastic in praise and ready to render Him substantial aid, oftentimes saved our Lord from the violence of His enemies. They were spoken extempore, many being impromptu utterances called forth by the occasion. Yet, we must bear in mind that our Lord was always a thinker, and, therefore, the germs of what

seemed to arise spontaneously to meet the occasion were perhaps a long time smouldering in His mind, waiting an opportunity to burst forth. It is unfortunate that we have not these sermons in full, as we could better judge of His method of arrangement and order. We can learn, however, all the characteristics of our Lord's homiletical methods. We are struck with their many points of excellence, and learn good lessons in sermonizing. It will be profitable to consider a few of these points more in detail, since their mastery tends to make sermons impressive and persuasive.

THE FREQUENT USE OF ILLUSTRATION:—The Prince of Orators teaches a lesson of the immense value of pictorial eloquence in His habitual employment of illustrations. Each and all of His discourses have so many illustrations, and so brilliant are they, that they seem like stars in a firmament of thought. Those bright gems of imagination and originality rendered this Great Orator's speech not only luminous, but overwhelmingly persuasive. It is a very difficult task to shut the mind and heart against a beautiful image of truth. Like pictures that flash a world of objects upon the eye at once, so that what would take hours to present in detail is seen at a glance, so illustrations flash a multitude of thoughts instantaneously upon the mind. Nor is this all: a thought once pictured remains forever. It is impossible to forget a truth that some illustration presents like a little drama, with many people acting. Who can ever forget God's love when he has read the

parable of the Prodigal Son?—or who can fail to discriminate between ostentatious and humble worship, self-glorification and mortified penitence, when he sees the swelling Pharisee and the sorrowing publican go up to pray? What an important lesson does our Saviour teach to all who would become true, persuasive preachers. His example is a decided rebuke to the silly cavil made by some against the use of illustration, regarding it as an inferior mode of instruction. Such deem imagination an untrustworthy guide, and prefer that truth should have a logical or metaphysical garb. It is possible that a wrong use may be made by the speaker, and irrelevant analogies lead to false conclusions, but the highest thing in this world may be abused. Long before logic and metaphysics were scientifically taught, men perceived truth by direct grapple with it. Logic is simply a form to set forth in order truths that are true without the form. A teacher may describe a flower to his pupils, or he may present it before them; the first method is dry—the second is interesting and convincing. Illustrations are concrete pictures of thought; they are object-lessons of principles. It is true in regard to illustrations, as it is with every good quality, they require genius to make them, and care in their interpretation. An orator should employ illustrations that are significant of thought, and the listener should seek only the analogy intended. The faculty of illustration can be cultivated, and every preacher should follow his Master's example, and make his sermons not only bright and interest-

ing, but more luminous and persuasive, by well-chosen illustrations. No doubt a preacher can impress his audience with profundity of thought if he clothes his arguments in the form of logic and abstract terms; but, although in this way he may be successful in concealing his poverty of ideas, he will fail to leave a permanent impression on the minds of his hearers. The example of Him who spoke as man never spoke is the most proper for all preachers to follow.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT:—The Sermon on the Mount is the most remarkable production of its kind in the world. Any exposition of Christ as an orator would be incomplete without some description of this, His most famous oration. The scene of its delivery has a fascination for the whole world, and has, besides, elements of beauty and romance. The mountain is supposed to be the saddle-shaped elevation known by the name, Kurn Hattin; or, the Horns of the Hattin. It overlooks a broad and undulating plain and the historic surface of the lake of Galilee. Its natural situation forms a suitable place for the gathering of the multitude. To these solitudes Christ came with some of His disciples to rest during the night. In the morning He chose twelve from the number of disciples to be His apostles. A great multitude, meanwhile, had come from the densely populated regions of Galilee, Judea, Jerusalem, and even from the distant sea-coasts of Tyre and Sidon, to hear His words. It was a scene of expectancy. All night many had waited, with sleepless

anxiety, for the dawn, to hear once more the oratory of the New Prophet. Group after group arranged themselves on the grassy sides of that natural amphitheatre. Jesus descended from the peak to the flat summit of the hill, and, after healing the sick, He began that discourse which the world has known as "The Sermon on the Mount." The sermon began with those sentences which have been called the Beatitudes (Matt. V.). To His audience these words must have sounded strange, a great departure from old methods of preaching.

And what were these things which He called "blessed?" The very opposite qualities to what they thought would be called blessed when the Messiah came. At the very beginning of His discourse Jesus had to meet false opinions and shatter delusions. But He was no timid speaker, no fearful orator groping carefully for the pulse of popularity, but bold, defiant, original, having a grasp of truth and command of expression unsurpassed, and so He utters again and again the word blessed: "Blessed are those things you would despise. Blessed is meekness, poverty, sorrow, persecution. These are richer far than pomp, splendor, victory, vengeance, power, authority, and boundless wealth." As He delivers truths so original, so potent with spiritual fire, so far above the miserable cant, and ceremonial righteousness of the rabbis, His soul must have dilated with oratoric power, for He grows more and more eloquent as He turns His eyes away from the vast multitudes who could not understand Him, and fixes them on the inner circle that sat on the more

elevated part of the mount, the band of disciples and chosen apostles. He directs a few words especially to them, of encouragement and warning: "Ye are the salt of the earth;" "Ye are the light of the world;" "Beware that the salt lose not its flavor nor the candle its light, for mark me, mark the figures I use, the world, this world, looks to you for regeneration and enlightenment and if you lose your flavor or your light, woe be to the world! For as salt that has lost its flavor is useless, and as a candle that is hid, so shall your eloquence, untouched by the new spirit, be powerless to reorganize and revive the religion of humanity." Perhaps some one had interrupted the speaker at this moment, calling His attention to the apparent conflict between His teachings and the old law, for He exclaims in earnest, thoughtful and impassioned language: "Do you think because I address these so pointedly, to let their light so shine before men that they may see their good works and glorify God, that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets? I am not come to destroy but to fulfil." Then in tremendous imagery He declares that heaven and earth shall pass away rather than the law, until it is fulfilled. "But you do not understand the law. You have made it of none effect by the readings of your rabbis. You must attain a higher righteousness than that of the Pharisees in order to enter the New Kingdom." Then with masterly conciseness and with wonderful power of contrast, He takes up, one by one, the teachings of the old dispensation and clothes them with new power and with marvelous light. The

old demanded outward action and obedience, the new was to be permeated by the spirit of liberty. Men were to be so spiritualized by the light of the New Kingdom that they would be a law unto themselves. They were to walk in marvelous liberty. The old law of murder would have its fulfilment in the individual judgment condemning even angry thoughts. The conscience enlightened by the new spirit would condemn even the thought of evil, and if necessary would sacrifice all worldly pleasure and even the body itself in the interest of the soul. So far from destroying the law, He gave it new life by extending its spirit into the hidden recess of motive and source of action. Every vain and unnecessary oath was now perjury. Love for friends and neighbors should extend itself also to one's enemies. The children of the New Kingdom were to be perfect even as their Father in Heaven was perfect. All the noisy, ostentatious shows so characteristic of ecclesiastical worship of the degenerate church of the day, were to have their reward in the praise of men only. The true disciple of the New Kingdom would still continue to give alms and offer prayers, but without show, and to God in secret. Hypocrisy was to be stripped of many of its aids to deception. Mere pious acts, little reverential genuflections, or ecclesiastic prostrations, standing in the market-place making long prayers, were to be regarded in their true light. The utmost simplicity of form would characterize the worship of the New Kingdom. The left hand would not know what the right hand did, and men would be more holy than

they seemed. They would have an undivided heart, loving and serving only one Master and trusting implicitly in the providential care of a Heavenly Father Who adorns lilies in more magnificent garb than great kings, and feeds ravens, and protects sparrows, and the lowliest things of His universe. Such a Father had the wisdom and power to uphold them, and they were more costly than many lilies or sparrows, and they need not be over-anxious about their daily food or clothing. There was also to be a clear perception of right and wrong. They were not to judge by outward appearance, the heart might be right even if the word was evil, and the motive right when the action seemed wrong. Besides it was well to be charitable and not condemn lest they be condemned. He that hath sin should not cast stones at the pure nor suspect others of sin. The saint ought to be saint and sit in judgment, not because the law so ordained, but because he was himself free from sin; thus blasting the worst form of hypocrisy, the sinner who condemns others for the very sin that he himself has committed. Such should first learn to cast the beam or mote out of his own eye before he criticises others. His beautiful figures of speech set forth impressively, like a glittering gem in a coronet, the qualifications for a perfect purity and integrity, the final judge being the Father who alone is perfect. The law of perseverance in moral and spiritual life is the same as in the natural, continuous seeking, knocking and asking. It is hard to refuse an earnest request. As the Heavenly Father's eye and ear are always open

to the petitions of His children, and His hand ready to give good gifts, so should the sons of men do to each other. It is useless piety that recognizes God as merciful and bounteous, and neglects to bring that tender spirit to the children of men. The best religion is the religion of humanity, and such can exist and endure only in the fullest and clearest application of the great law: "Do unto others as ye would they should do unto you." Then in His own poetic picture-like way, He points out that the new life is by no means easy: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate," avoid the broad way, for all good in the world is difficult of attainment, while the superficial requires but little exertion. The way of pleasure, indolence and intellectual egotism is broad, the way of purity, liberty and eternal life is narrow. False teachers, who seek to exalt themselves and spread evil opinions among men, are to be known by their fruit, just as grapes are gathered from the vine and not from thorns. The mere calling upon the name of God, the uttering of some formula, or the stated use of some pious gesture would not gain admission into the New Kingdom; only the pure in heart shall see God. At the close of the sermon in one of the most concise, vivid pictures the world has ever beheld. He declares the true features of preaching and the danger of inattention to the voice of the preacher. What is the object of my preaching to you, if you come only to hear? Preaching is not the utterance of word, or the setting in order fine theories, but a living power, ordained not only to declare truth but to make men better, to

build character, to unchain the soul bound in slavery to sin, to awaken the dormant image of God by earnest appeal to every faculty in the human mind and every motive in the human heart until all men reach perfection of manhood. Such is preaching in its true sense. It is hearing and doing. The very spirit and result of preaching is building up character. For he that heareth and doeth according to the sayings of the preacher shall build his character, fair and enduring, like a house erected upon a rock, and all the floods and storms of life shall not prevail against him. On the other hand, he that hears but does not do the words of the Orator of God shall build his character, weak and tottering, like a house constructed on the sands which the winds and the floods sweep away. Such is a brief outline of the most wonderful sermon in the world, the sermon which since its utterance has become a household word. The peasant knows its vivid pictures by heart. Kings in their palaces tremble at its awful warnings against pomp and power. Judges hear its exposition of truth, and catch glimpses of a divine and infallible court. The sorrow-broken, the friendless, persecuted sons of men find consolation in its blessed words of promise. The pure in heart recognize in its precepts the true religion of humanity. It was a sermon for prince and outcast, for poet and philosopher, for saint and blasphemer. All who heard it were astonished at the doctrine and the manner of the Sacred Orator, and exclaimed: "Who is this? What new prophet has arisen? He speaks as one having authority, and not as the scribes."

CHAPTER XIII.

“NEVER MAN SPAKE LIKE THIS MAN.”

“NEVER man spake like this Man” is, perhaps, the most wonderful saying in the world; it is certainly the most remarkable utterance in the domain of oratory. There are great sayings which stick in the memory like burns upon clothing, or fire the imagination like stars in the firmament, or stir the heart like a military band, but this utterance seems to awaken the whole soul. “Never man spake like this Man.” The more we ponder its meaning, the more wonderful it seems. For when we think we have discovered its application, and that its meaning must surely be restricted to the time and place of its utterance, we are amazed to find deep after deep of hidden thought, and what at first sight seemed but a casual remark is indeed a truth coined for all time and embraces a universe of meaning. The occasion of the utterance was one of thrilling interest. It was the day of the great Feast of Tabernacles. Jesus had taught boldly in the Temple, and had asserted His relationship with the Father. The Sanhedrin sent a band of officers to apprehend Him while He was teaching. With these officers came several prominent rabbis, or teachers—men whose learning would make them competent to pass judgment on the speech

and manner of Jesus. For some time these officers lingered among the Temple courts and hid behind the shadows of the great pillars, listening critically to the discourse of our Lord. They had come with hostile intent; the Sanhedrin had declared that Jesus was an impostor and must be silenced. As they listened, they were amazed at His power to sway the multitude, and at the grandeur of the truths He taught. Many beautiful truths, clothed in His striking phraseology, fell from His lips: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink;" "He that believeth in me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." His discourse was so powerful that many were persuaded that He was the Christ. The words of Jesus had made so profound an impression—not only on the vast multitude, but even on the officers sent to arrest Him—that they were awed and held spellbound. Instead of advancing forward to seize the bold speaker, they clung, trembling, to the pillars of the Temple, and finally slunk away, without even attempting to question His authority or lay hands upon Him; and when they returned to the Sanhedrin, which had been keeping perpetual session during the great feast, to the question of the chief priests and Pharisees—"Why have ye not brought Him?"—they answered in words which revealed how much they had come under the spell of the Great Orator: "We were unable to arrest Him, for never before have we listened to such eloquence. Never man spake like this Man." In such terms did learned men of Christ's day speak of His elo-

quence. They at once placed Him above all the prophets and preachers of their own and preceding ages. In the vivid declaration, "Never man spake like this Man," the universe seems to unfold before the mental vision, and all the great of the world to pass in procession—the renowned in philosophy, in intelligence, in oratory. All that have ever, at any period, awakened the pulse of civilization to higher throbs, or the mind of man to more exalted conceptions of truth, by wisdom and speech, are forever out-distanced by Christ. And the more we ponder this sweeping statement in the light of the history of the ages that have passed since these words were uttered, the more its truth and full application appear. No doubt the rabbis who made this declaration were struck first of all by the greatness of the truth which He uttered, for no speaker can be impressive simply in the enunciation of words. Something important or weighty to say is absolutely necessary to the most effective oratory. It is evident that the men of our Lord's age were captivated by His wisdom. "From whence has this Man such wisdom?" "His words are full of wisdom and power," were common remarks. The truths which Jesus uttered were the loftiest truths in the universe, and by their very nature could not fail to awaken the most powerful emotional elements in the hearts of listener and speaker. Persuasive honey dropped from each flowery truth, and rills of irresistible wisdom made great channels in the hard soil of doubt. Christ's mind was richly stored with divine and human wisdom, and

with all the inner elements of oratory. As His truths are universal and fundamental in their nature, the world cannot make progress without them. Christ said of His own sayings: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." What a bold declaration! But it shows how fully Jesus was master of His subject. He seemed to be fully persuaded in His own mind that no prophet or teacher coming after Him could surpass His sublime teachings.

Every philosopher, every teacher and every orator, has striven for an abiding place in the hearts of men, but very few have uttered anything which men have thought worth preserving. The world bears on its bosom no greater wrecks than the broken and dismembered systems of philosophy and religion. The graves of men are numerous; they are in the valleys and on the hillsides; but the graves of their words, sayings, speculations, philosophies, theories and religions are more numerous still. Hundreds of beautiful sayings and sublime speeches are buried in the sands of time, but the sayings of Jesus still remain, still inflame the hearts of men, and still work miracles of wonder and revolution. Never spake man like this Man, because no man ever presented truths in such an ideal or universal manner. Other men taught the same truths, but not in the same way, and their truths and themselves are forgotten, or have lost their hold on the mind of man. It was Christ's method of presenting truths that has made them more enduring and persuasive. This must be true, since scholars declare that nearly all Jesus taught may be found in

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the works of other prophets. In the Old Testament many of His principal truths are found, and much of His wisdom was taught ages before by the prophets of other great religions. This may be true, for all truth must have existed from the foundation of the world, awaiting the mind of the discoverer and the daring tongue of the advocate to make them known. It is the method of presenting truth that renders it more abiding and persuasive in the teachings of some than in others.

While many prophets sought to present truth in local garb and to meet the wants of their own age, Christ presented His truths for all time. Hence there never can come an age whose civilization will be superior to His teachings. He presents His truths as ideals, types, patterns, not attainable in the present, but to be striven after, until the weakness of humanity is done away and the day of perfection dawns. Men must try to regulate their conduct according to the tender code of the Sermon on the Mount. That is the ideal, but many ages must intervene and human nature must grow much better before the ideal can be made practical. How beautifully He expresses universal kindness in His striking saying: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you;" "Resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek turn to him the other also." These are perfect ideals of conduct but cannot at present be literally followed. The endurance of Christ's words, however, may be prophesied because of their ideal presentation. It is impossible

ever to achieve in actual conduct the ideal. The painted brook may suggest but can never realize, the whispering purls and sparkling wavelets of the mountain stream gliding on to the ocean. No artist however skilful, could trace on marble the ideal of his conception of the human face, and every statue is inferior to the living model. Jesus recognized that the human heart and mind stood in need of ideals, rather than precepts and laws; hence He teaches fundamental truths rather than complicated systems. He spake as never man spoke, because He uttered His truths in pictures that awakened ideals of life and duty that the world can never outgrow.

Under the practical application of His magnificent sayings the fashion of the world may change, governments, laws, prisons, penitentiaries, infirmaries, hospitals, and every temporary arrangement for sheltering weakness and virtue may pass away, but His ideals will still remain higher than even the most perfect human civilization. Jesus has nothing to say that is simply external or artificial, but with wondrous eloquence unfolds the inner spirit, the very heart of truth. The great prophets before His day had set forth the same truths, but in a temporary manner. They sought to regenerate man by laws, restrictions, ceremonies and symbols, but Jesus, with a most marvellous insight into the spiritual nature of things, expresses truth in the language of "The Forever." Mark how He preaches God's goodness and love in language that startles the human soul. The old Greek philosophers thought of the gods as loving in their

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nature, but how trifling and insincere was their method of expressing that love. The prophets spoke of an Almighty and Merciful Creator, but how faint the description of infinite love, compared with methods of expressing the same truth found in the sermons of Jesus: "Greater love can no man have than to lay down his life for another;" "God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son to the end that all that believe in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." No doubt the great moral truths which Jesus uttered must have been exceedingly startling and impressive, but it must be remembered, that the scholars who declared that "never man spake like this Man," were familiar with most of the truths. They knew of God as a Father, they had a deep perception of sin and the necessity of atonement, but what amazed them in listening to Jesus was that, while He did not destroy the law, nor put aside old truths, He expressed them in a new way and with more universal application. To use a saying of our Lord's, He did not destroy the law but He fulfilled it. He did not take away old truths, but in some mysterious way He made them new and gave them the breath of life.

Pass in review all that the world admires as best and greatest in song, philosophy, religion and eloquence, and we cannot help exclaiming with the Hebrew scholars: "Never man spake like this Man." It might be granted that Jesus taught nothing original, that all His truths may be found in philosophy, prophecy, and in the great Eastern religions, but mark the greater impression that truth, presented by Jesus,

has made upon the world. Truth presented by Plato, Confucius, Zoroaster, has been almost powerless to stay the degeneracy of the races their systems have influenced. Arabia, Turkey, India, China, are left far behind in civilization by Christian nations. Buddha's presentation of truth has done but little for the millions that live in the most fertile regions of the world; and African tribes, under the teaching of nature and man, still linger in darkness and rude barbarism, while the words that Jesus uttered have awakened savage tribes into splendid nations; have made cruel men benevolent; ignorant men wise; have broken down barriers of race, color, caste, and blood; extinguished slavery in every land where Christian truth flourishes; have shattered the strongest despotisms and the most formidable tyrannies; have given light, liberty, prosperity and smiling plenty to the world. Where we see darkness fleeing away; ignorance and superstition dying; misery giving place to happiness, and despair to hope; wherever Jesus' method of presenting truth is followed, we can surely exclaim with increasing admiration and wonder, as the ages roll and the nations arise in splendor and power: "Never man spake like this Man."

We have said that His expressional method more than the grandeur of His truths has made the impression on the world and this method separates Him from the mere teacher, and ranks Him as the greatest of orators. True oratory is the imparting of the soul-force of the speaker into the heart of the hearer. Truth given to the intellect is no oratory, that is instruction;

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truth imparted so as to awaken the heart and will is eloquence. In true oratory there must always be present two great elements—truth and personality. The last is most essential, its absence from the spoken discourse is fatal. Eloquence is dead when its soul, personality, is absent. The sun's light is welcome even when the sun's glory is veiled in vaporous sky, but it is the sun himself that warms the world and imparts eternal light and everlasting heat. So ideas without personality are shadows, pleasing to look at and admire, but powerless for exalting and abiding influence; that is the work of the living soul.

flake! Ten thousand sages to-day with loud voices are extolling knowledge and declaring that the salvation of the world depends upon uniformity of law and breadth of ideas. They gather knowledge from every shell upon the seashore, and every ripple in the age-decaying strata of the mountains, from every wind-blown seed and every jelly-flake that clings to the hard sea-rock, and swelling into lofty egotism in the midst of discovery, invention, and Alpine heights of knowledge, exclaim: "We are the masters of the world." But as age after age and generation after generation glides by, and knowledge seems powerless to solve the problems of the race, and great philosophers and scientists, rich in learning and wisdom, pass away and are forgotten, they begin to wonder why the world still clings to its Great Religious Instructor,—Christ. Again and again, they prophesied that Christ's truths would lose their hold on the human race, but still His truths are a living force. If they had studied deeply the

difference between Christ's method of imparting truth and that of the world's great scholars, they would never have made any such prophecy. Jesus has taken hold of the only permanent element in soul-building,—the living contact of soul with soul. The world's teachers exclaimed: "Here is knowledge, take it and make yourselves better." Jesus cried: "Here am I, take me. Make yourselves better by appropriating personality. As I feed upon the Father even so ye should feed upon me." That is, Christ chose the orator's method. He sought not so much to teach men facts as to impart the subtle power of personality into the facts. Other teachers sought to give men ideas and having written them out, thought their task completed, and wondered why the world did not become better. But men are not saved by the amount of knowledge they possess, nor is moral character built by quoting the sayings of the learned, by geographical knowledge of the world, by classification of the strata of the earth, by arranging the brilliant gems of the heavens into stars of the first and second magnitude, or by applying hard names and difficult terms to the simple flowers of the field. Facts and ideas in order to influence men must be in living contact with the source of life. It is life that begets life and in the domain of soul-building, at least, the orator's method is supreme. Ideas, principles, laws, truths, in themselves are ghostly things, and flit through the mind in cloudy obscurity, impressing neither heart nor conscience until they become incarnate in the personality of some great man. Then what a change takes place.

With what wondrous beauty they seem to fit the marvelous architecture of the human character. Then they breathe with warm breath, and look upon us with earnest, sad eyes, and touch with soft and sympathetic hand, and speak in thrilling tones of love.

Jesus had abundance of ideas, but His chief power was not in them. It was always and earnestly His aim to draw attention from His truths to Himself. In this giving of self He excelled all other teachers, and justly merits the great epithet of speaking as man never spoke. He sought to draw the world away from its speculations, its ceremonies, its petty shows of piety, its dogmas, its vain reliance upon ritual, and fix its vision for all time upon the source of all power, all life and all immortality,—upon Himself, as a living power of expression, always filled with the truths of His Father and conveying those through the agency of human personality. Other great teachers had said: “Accept our ideas, our discoveries, our systems.” The prophets of the great religions of the world said: “Do this deed, and make this renunciation, and you shall be saved. Build your character by certain rules of conduct and ascetic practices;” but Jesus said: “Live by me;” “Feed upon me.” They buried themselves in their theories and systems, and asked their followers to do likewise, but Christ buried Himself in the personality of God, and asked His followers to bury themselves in His personality as the express image of God. The difference between Christ and other teachers is, therefore, one of expression, since they all alike had the same truth, but the truth is more powerful in the

hands of Christ, because He relied upon the living soul to communicate His truths to living souls. We do not wish to enter the domain of theology, but only to keep to our subject, the elucidation of Christ as an orator, but such a flood of light seems often to come upon disputed points of theology in the course of our investigation of the expressional mission of our Lord, that we have often been tempted to show how such a view of our Saviour's mission clears up many obscure points.

We will, however, make one remark in passing: If it is true as we have found in our investigation that Christ was the Speaking-God, that is, the Messenger who makes known the truth and will of God, then His truths are bound up with His personality. It is, therefore, contrary to the spirit of Christianity to separate, as some do, Christ from His truths. There are those who declare that His truths are sufficient and we need not Christ: crystalize His teachings in creeds, dogmas, churches and systems of theology and the person of Christ may be forgotten without loss of influence. In this way Christianity will become a philosophy, and, as has happened to all philosophies, its grave stands ready and the world will read the burial service. Christianity deprived of the personal element will have no more influence than other religions, and if the truth it contains is the most important, then there is no reason why the truths of all religions should not be collected and one great universal religion made for the world. This seems to be the drift of the ages, because the preacher-element in

Christianity is being more and more pushed aside. The person of our Lord is forgotten in the tumult of church organization and mechanical worship, while the scientific and philosophic savants crying aloud, "Take knowledge," substitute for a personal God the crudities of the metaphysical conscience.

It was the glory of the Hebrew race that its religion began with a personal God and every prophet in the long line of brilliant teachers sought to keep alive that inspiring conception. Christ made this idea of the Creator of the Universe still more plain, for He sought to make the world see and understand God in human flesh: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father;" "The words that I speak are not mine own but His that sent me." We thus see how essential is the personal nature of Jesus to Christianity. No definition of God that robs Him of personality can make God a living power capable of receiving and imparting love.

Matthew Arnold is ages behind Christ, and even behind the Hebrew prophets, when he defines God as "a power not ourselves that makes for righteousness," because in such a definition the personal element is wanting. Yet this method of looking at God, so prevalent in our day, as power, force, law without personality, is sapping the very foundation of all belief and of all power of character-development. The men of to-day are asked to worship a series of "natural laws," "a sequence of events," "an evolution of atoms," "an eternal energy," "a stream of tendency," instead of a personal God. But there can be no love nor

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relationship between a person and a force. How can man worship a "stream of tendency," or "an eternal energy," or "an evolved atom?" Or, how can man lay hold of such forces to improve his character? Men will despise that which has no personality, since they owe no duty to formless matter, or shadowy force, or streams of tendency. The world must be regenerated through love, and love is reciprocal, it exists only between persons. Love itself is the highest child of expression and burns in infinite intensity in the heart of the greatest personality in the world, Jesus Christ. He demands love to Himself as a person, as the only force that will make them remember and obey His truths: "If ye love me ye will keep my commandments." In thus emphasizing the personal nature of truth, Christ speaks as no prophet or religionist ever spoke. His precepts, truths, and commands were given not to bind but to make free. Man was to be lord of the Sabbath and of every ordinance, because the personal nature is higher than the circumstantial or the environment. He declared again and again: "I have the words of life, I am the way, the truth and the life;" "I shall give you the truth, and the truth shall make you free." There is always this personal relation. The closer the relationship, the more clear the comprehension of truth. From servants to friends His disciples would pass and find richer truth and deeper meaning. And the personal relationship would exist even after earthly separation, for He said He would be with them even unto the end.

When the applauding multitudes said of Christ that He was unlike their own teachers, for He spoke with authority, they expressed in their own way the personal nature of Christ's oratory. It is the personal element that gives power and persuasiveness to discourse. These people had heard most of His truths from their own rabbis, and the comments and catechism they knew from their youth, yet they were startled by the same truth when uttered by Jesus, which under the teaching of authority and ecclesiastical ordinance had failed, and they could not but draw the contrast between Christ's method and their own scribes. The scribes' method was that of the teacher not of the orator. There was no warm soul behind the ideas and facts, but a lifeless machine repeating what the memory had laboriously acquired. Their preaching was dogmatic, narrow and earthly. It had neither freshness of substance nor warmth of manner. From their brain no flash of genius, no gems of poetic diction were possible, for such flashes would reveal the awful darkness of their religion. Noble thoughts, originality of expression breathed but to die and were embalmed in their Levitical mint and anise and cummin, and shrouded in long robes with large fringes and broad phylacteries. How could thought and spiritual life find food in a worship which had given itself up to such nice questions as when within a few seconds the new moons and the Sabbath days began, or when cups and platters could be pronounced clean, or whether it were right to eat an egg laid on the Sabbath. But the same remark could be made of

much of the education in our time. There are scribes and Pharisees to-day who have lost sight of the personal element in preaching, and painfully repeat Christian truth after the chilling model of set forms and ice-clad dogmas. No truth of itself is powerful. It has influence only when some soul utters it or when some mind struggles with it. Personality is the active conquering force. Truths that failed to awaken even a passing emotion when uttered by others, as they fell from Christ's lips imparted life to men and set the world on fire. We do not seek to disparage the methods which the world generally uses for education; on the contrary, we would give them a very high place. Our universe is full of wonderful objects and forces which exert an extraordinary influence upon the heart and mind of man. It is almost impossible to conceive of a more perfect arrangement of matter for the purpose of education, for the tiniest speck of creation has something about it which arrests attention and stimulates inquiry. Who can pass through the allotted time of human life careless and unthoughtful, when there are so many forms of creation, such manifold expressions of life, such stupendous and mysterious forces working problems, deep, intricate, puzzling, demanding for their solution the keenest intellect and the clearest vision. It would seem as if the whole universe was aiming for one object, had but one mission, to fulfil the evolution and education of man. There is much in nature, even in her uniform unfolding, which arrests the attention of man. And knowledge reveals itself in the feeblest growth of creation,

in the tiniest flower and in the smallest insect that crawls. We can learn much from nature in her extraordinary physical phenomena, in the roar of the ocean and the terrific thunder of her mighty Niagaras. But the most perfect and the grandest instrument in the universe for imparting thought and feeling is personality. From the living lips come the truths more divine, more spiritual, which have their origin only in a great human soul. It is the one power, the one successful teacher in the universe. It brings about revolutions, builds the monuments of progress and makes all history a theatre of wonder and absorbing interest.

Whatever may have been the magnitude of the forces engaged in the world's great movements, the sublimest force is that which directs and controls them all,—the mind and heart of man. Not the roar of the artillery, nor the shout and shock of battle, nor the wreck of material, nor the groans of the suffering, lend the sublimest character to a battle-field, but the thought that humanity is the motive and directing power. After the battle of Waterloo the grandest thing that the sun beheld when it looked down through the smoke of war, was not the wreck of material, wealth and power, but the wreck of humanity, one army retiring defeated, the other victorious, and the sublimest of all was the fate of the two great men that led the battle: Wellington returning victorious to hear all Europe sound his praise; Napoleon, who had lately ruled that same Europe in majesty and power, retiring defeated and broken-

hearted to a prison. Could anything be more sublime, more full of impressive awe? And yet it was the marked personality of each leader that marshalled the events and closed the war in gloom and misery for one, and joy and victory for the other. It is this same personal element, the influence of soul upon soul, that makes oratory the grandest force in the world.



CHAPTER XIV.

THE KINGDOM OF EXPRESSION.

IT was this oratoric method that Christ sanctified, first in His own person and afterwards in the persons of His disciples, to the regeneration of the world. And who shall dare to condemn His choice, or who shall say the world has not been made better by the great force of expression, purified and inspired by the grandest personality in the universe? But the superiority and impressibility of Christ's method did not end with Himself. He organized it as a continual force, to cease only with the destruction of the world; and here again we shall have decisive proof of the great words, "Never man spake like this Man."

In keeping with the spirit of His mission, which was the manifestation, or expression, of God in human flesh, He recognized that a similar manifestation of God must be given throughout all future time. This could only be accomplished by sending forth those who would manifest, though imperfectly, to men His image or presentation of the Father. For this purpose He selected a number of men to be with Him and to catch the inspiration of His personality. In other words, He had planned from the beginning to organize the oratorical forces in the cause of God and

humanity. The round, full, whole-souled method of teaching truth characteristic of true oratory was chosen from the beginning. He came to establish a preaching kingdom. Others had established kingdoms of force, of knowledge, of authority, of fear and of superstition; He determined to enlist the power of expression, the great forces of the human heart and mind, in the cause of progress. The nobility and universality of such a plan is at once evident. The force of expression is the most accessible instrument in the universe for imparting knowledge and influencing character, and it shall endure forever. As the light of knowledge blazes on every hill of our universe, and men become more and more engaged in commercial pursuits, and nations lose their boundaries in the gradual disappearance of race characteristics and in the necessity for coöperation and reunion, war will grow less and less, and, as a force, will cease altogether. The sword of law and majesty will rust in the scabbard, and the sceptre of force and the mitre of authority will crumble under the weight of ages of cobwebs. Then men shall be ruled by reason, thought, and appeals to their manhood. The power of expression shall be supreme, and soul-development shall come from the personal contact of reason with reason, emotion with emotion, and inspiration with inspiration.

The far-seeing intellect of Christ was never more fully shown than in thus organizing preaching to be a continuous power. He made choice of men to be apostles and disciples. These men were chosen be-

cause they had characteristics that would fit them for preachers and pastors. He was not hasty in making selections for this office, but spent the night in prayer; and, even after they were chosen, He kept them for years around His person. His only method of developing and preparing them for their life-work was the expressional method—preaching—and personal fellowship. His effort was not to destroy their individuality, but to make their natures more harmonious, and, hence, better expressions of His own nature. Recognizing that perfect humanity approaches the divine, He consecrated to His work whatever was truly human in the hearts of His chosen disciples. Those who teach that a man's individuality should be shut out of preaching ought to consider the example of their Master and the true nature of preaching. So far from Christ entertaining any such conception, He chose His apostles because they had diverse individuality, and named them according as He recognized their characteristics. He called Simon, Petros, a rock, because of his nature. He was not afraid of fiery or energetic natures, for He had apostles that He called "Sons of Thunder." A look at the chosen twelve reveals men of various types of character: John, the contemplative, poetic and loving; Peter, the out-spoken, energetic, and fiery, ready even to cut his Master's enemies to pieces; Andrew, the joyful, sympathetic, evangelical preacher, always alert to bring disciples to his Master; Nathaniel, the man in whom there was no guile; Thomas, the fearful, cautious doubter; James, the earnest churchman; and Matthew, the scholastic.

The selection of men of marked individuality to be preachers shows that Jesus did not favor that monotonous uniformity which some desire in our age. He rather encouraged the expression of truth through individuality. It is not desirable that all should preach like Peter or Paul, but all should be filled with the spirit of Christ. The personality of Jesus taking hold of the nature of each would impart harmony and unity of spirit, but His servants should reveal gifts of preaching differing one from another. The sign of a living church is its spirit of toleration, and its capacity to accept teaching from every master-spirit inspired by Christ.

The organization of a kingdom whose influence should be the power of speech was stupendous in conception and magnificent in its achievement. Never in the history of man had any such an organization been planned and brought into operation. The Greeks had temples and oracles and rites and ceremonies, but no systematic ordinance of preaching. Their priests were concerned mainly with the burning of the entrails of birds, with the savory smoke of oxen and lambs, and when they spoke it was in the language of muttered incantation, or echoes of unknown voices, dying away in the vast recesses of gloomy caves and mysterious underground temples. Such institutions sought to appeal to the lives of men not through reason or through spiritual emotion by means of language, but through fear, by means of weird rites and magical formulas. It was a childish, superstitious influence, and men were sure to outgrow

it. There were, of course, the philosophers and the orators who employed speech, but these did not organize anything which could be called a kingdom of speech.

The Hebrew people had their synagogue service which approached the nearest in its spirit and method to the church of Christ, but since the extinction of the line of the great prophets, even the Hebrew sought to instruct by elaborate services and spectacular shows, and the work of preaching had degenerated to little sermonettes of memorized quotations and the repetition of the opinions of some eminent rabbi. The idea of a vast kingdom, embracing all mankind and extending its influence within and without by the power of eloquence, was, in the history of man, at once unique, original, startling, and could not fail to arrest the attention of all the nations of the world. What shall we say of the first King, Originator, Planner, and Greatest Example of its spirit and power? Shall we not say of Him, His place in history is on the Throne of the Highest, and in the memory of man His name is forever imperishable?

We can hardly overestimate the importance and influence of the force which Jesus thus consecrated and organized to be the chief power in the universe of spiritual education. Its achievements have far surpassed the sword and the pen in the mighty revolution it has brought into the world. The highest force on earth for development of moral manhood, is the power of preaching. Christ to-day has that hold upon the admiration and hearts of men for which Napoleon,

Alexander and Cyrus strove in vain. What the sword has failed to do the tongue has accomplished. And when we look back across the misty hills of the past into the little province of Galilee, and gaze at the small beginnings of this mighty force as that wonderful hand and eloquent tongue organized it, we are amazed, and exclaim with the scholars of His own day, His preaching was with power.

Think how much the world owes to the influence of preaching, and mark how humbly it began. Jesus upon His entrance into public life, proclaims His mission to be that of a preacher, and acting in this spirit He goes from village to village and from town to town, preaching the Kingdom of God. He gathers a few disciples, obscure, unlearned men, and sets their hearts aglow with the same idea. Night and day He instructs them until they also are skilful to divide the word of truth. He gives them commission, even as He had Himself received, to preach. He says to them: "The world is before you; that world belongs to me, and you must conquer it in my name. The weapons of warfare are reason, experience, faith, love; and the sword of propagation is eloquence tempered in the fire of God. Go forth, assault the conscience, speak to the heart, stir the will, until men reach the full stature of manhood." They went forth, they stormed the world; and men stood amazed, and trembled at the new power. From that day the world's victories, enterprises, battles for human progress, faith, hope and love have been waged by the Christian orators. It will ever remain a wonder, that the greatest revolution

ever known, was achieved by the preaching of a few fishermen of Galilee. It is well worth while to ponder our Lord's method of starting and keeping alive this kingdom and the instruction He gave to its early founders. The election of a little band, twelve in number, from the greater company of disciples, to be always near Him, seems to be original with Jesus. The twelve were the charmed inner circle, that had the high honor to be ever with the Master, to eat, walk, and commune with Him, and absorb the rich spirit of the Sacred Orator. Who can picture the sweetness and enthusiasm of the sacred relationship, or tell how full the hearts of each must have beat with the glow of anticipated hope? We know how the presence of some rare spirit, the glowing countenance of the great and good, the glance of some famous orator, or the sparkling utterance of a distinguished poet stirs our hearts with wild enthusiasm. What must have been the glorious ecstasy that thrilled these simple-minded men to be thus ever in the presence of the greatest personality in the universe! It is also touching to think of the relationship which Jesus bore to this little band. He had chosen them; their lives, destinies and fortunes were in His hand. They had forsaken all to follow Him; thenceforth their lives were bound up with His. How tenderly He must have watched their unfolding talents and rejoiced at the growth of the powers which should regenerate the world. They were true-hearted men and Jesus loved them, but they needed much to fit them for the great honor He would give them. The three earnest years of

patient teaching must have been full of tender incidents and loving scenes. They must have looked upon the Master with reverence, and often His patient spirit would be greatly tried at the dulness of their comprehension. He accuses them sometimes of being slow to comprehend the prophecies, or to understand the high spiritual significance of His words, but after all He loved these men, since they journeyed with Him patiently, shared His dangers and were ever willing to learn, and oftentimes He makes excuses for them,—the flesh is weak, but the spirit is willing,—and calls them, His brethren, fellow-workers, little children and friends.

We see the personal element in this fellowship of Jesus with His disciples. It was the oratorical method. Truth is weak, is nothing if unheralded by the human voice, eye and hand. He flashed truth into their minds by the magnetism of speech and personality. And behold the result; ignorant fishermen and degraded tax-gatherers develop into saintly men, into kings of thought and of moral power, awakened from darkness and obscurity, into the light of intelligence and moral resolution. Nor did His personal influence end in the perfection of the characters of His disciples; it lived in them and breathed through them on others, until the world stood wondering at an unexampled spiritual power, that seemed unconquerable and irresistible; which transformed the lives and characters of men, making the ignorant wise, the mean noble, the sinful pure; and restored in splendid measure the image of God.

Thus having educated them, He sends them forth with definite instructions, and, as the sacred writers say, He gave them power. A very necessary gift if the world, whose every hill was a garrison of soldiers, and every castle a wall of glittering swords, should fall a victim to their arts of peace. It was not the power of learning, brilliant talents or scholarship, but the power of personality. In the strength of spiritual communion with the ever-present Master they were to go forth, and fear neither the wiles of Satan, nor the temptations of the world; neither the smiles of the great, nor the threats of the mighty. They needed power, for He said He sent them forth as lambs among wolves, without purse, script, shoes, or any instrument of support or protection. But they would not lack for raiment or for food, for He that made man planted gratitude, compassion and generosity in his heart; to that they were to appeal, on that they were to rely. "Into whatever city you enter," He said, "seek out the worthy ones and with them abide until your work is finished." In other words, they were to live by preaching. The work was too precious, too sacred, too urgent to be neglected in employments which sought material riches only. They were to give their whole time to preaching and trust to the kindness of those among whom they labored for their daily bread. Their mission was one of peace, generosity and beneficence: "Freely ye have received, freely give." They were to scatter benedictions of peace; and heal the sick; and mourn with the weeping; and rejoice with the rejoicing. And as they went from

town to town and from city to city they were to cry: "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." No feeble cry this, like the cry of the modern preacher in his fashionable church, that the Kingdom of Heaven is afar off and is coming some day in the clouds. The kingdom is here, is on earth; now is the time to repent, now is the day of salvation; earth is to become like Heaven when God's will is done. "Thy kingdom come on earth as it is in Heaven" is the cry of the true Christian orator. Whenever this cry has been heeded, the church of God has been most powerful. The commission of Christ to the early founders of the church must not be forgotten. It indicates clearly that the gospel was to work a wondrous and healthy change in the social condition of the world. The members of the kingdom were to receive blessings and even material prosperity. All preaching will fail to affect the lives of men which appeals only to the dim past or mysterious future. The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. How such a message ought to appeal to the men of our day. How glad they should be to hear of the possibility that our mourning, poverty-stricken earth, may be brought into contact with the healing spirit of Heaven. Such was the message that shook the world in the days of the apostles and gave them victory over sin, fashion and despotism.

Another remarkable feature in our Saviour's commission to His disciples was His singular direction how to meet opposition: "But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, 'Even the very dust of your

city which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you; notwithstanding, be ye sure of this, that the Kingdom of God is come nigh unto you,' but I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city."

If the people did not receive the gospel, they were to shake off the very dust from their feet as a testimony against them, and it would be more tolerable in the Day of Judgment for Sodom than for that city. A strange injunction this, but how full of power! The rich sand sprinkled with gold of tropic climes, has not the power that this dust shaken in sorrow from the feet of the messengers of peace, has, to blight and condemn. If Sodom, with all its wretched sin, is more tolerable in God's eye, than those who refuse the benediction of peace and reconciliation, how great must be the peril of the sermon-hardened sinner, who sits year after year in his comfortable pew, in stolid indifference to the most exalted and tender appeals of the preacher's voice. Shake off the dust, as a testimony against those who shut their hearts against the preacher's voice, is a tremendous utterance. It is as if Christ said, "I have sent my messengers into the world, have given them a mission and a voice, and if you hear them not, woe to you. My message shall not be trampled upon with impunity. My servants shall have protection. You may reject, imprison, slay and kill my preachers, but you can only do such things for a short time, in the *little* now, but in the solemn and *great* future you shall be in danger of eternal death."

Every preacher should take courage from these words and form a higher estimate of the truth he announces and go forth with the firm reliance that Christ is with him. A timid, time-serving, fawning preacher, who regards his mission simply to sit securely in some fat pulpit, doling out miserable morsels of diluted gospel has not caught the spirit of the Great Orator's commission. The dread of men's persons, the enslaving power of wealth, the enervating influence of fashion, and the paralyzing dread of poverty, unmans, unnerves too many preachers. The awful worldly method by which many churches are supported, which hands the minister into the power of a few wealthy members, and ever points the dreadful finger of poverty in his face, and in the faces of his wife and children, kills both the message and the messenger. Still the preacher, if he wishes to do the Master's work, must boldly strike sin in the face; must, like his Master, smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and slay the wicked with the breath of his lips. And if in the announcement of truth, toil and suffering come, and imprisonment and persecution bind their cords around him, he must look for help on high, and remember that he who seeks to save his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for Christ's sake shall find it. The person of Christ gives such grace and power to His cause that a timid, sneaking tone, which seems to say, this is the message, but I am too faint of heart to deliver it, and stand in fear of you, my people, is disgraceful on the part of the sacred orator, Better Paul's injunction, "Preach the word, be instant

in season and out of season, rebuke, admonish and trust in the God of all power and love." The heroic nature of the charge given to the first heralds of the gospel should thrill with manly valor the preachers of the Kingdom. The gospel was designed to break down all superstition and tyranny, and bring under the Master's feet all principalities and powers and even the kingdom of Satan and death. All sin and sorrow were to flee away, and tears and pain were to be wiped out.

What military power there is in the thought that the Kingdom of Heaven may fill the earth with troops of salvation and armies of glorious blessings, and that the Prince of the Kingdom is Lord of Lords and King of Kings, and shall reign from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth. In the light of this heroic charge, the church should be more aggressive within and without its fold. Preachers should be more like kings, announcing a message which cannot be scorned, neglected and refused without impending danger. The great work of the church is not to satisfy the heathen instincts of man by spectacular shows, but to build character by appeals to their understanding and their hearts. The chief message of the church is preaching. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every living creature" was the last command of her Master and Founder, the Prince of Orators. "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" were His words to His first preachers.

CHAPTER XV.

THE CHARTER OF THE KINGDOM OF EXPRESSION.

THIS command of our Lord to His disciples may be regarded as the "charter" of His kingdom; it is full and explicit, and covers its great functions and privileges. The extent of its domain was over the nations of the world; its object, to scatter blessings, by the restoration of moral order—first in the individual, and then in the nation; the weapon or instrument of propagation, that which demands the exercise of the whole man—oratory. The two main divisions of the charter are in keeping with the oratorical methods of our Lord, for the same commission which He had received from His Heavenly Father He gave to His disciples. "Preach the truth," He says, "and preach through your own personality. Go ye into all the world; do not write the truth, nor circulate tracts, nor make little side-shows, nor spectacular services, nor musical festivals, nor place into the hands of hungry men a dry creed, or fossil dogma, or snow-clad system." They were not to seek to win the world by such methods. These are very good in their own way, but that is not Christ's method; that has been the way of the great teachers of the past, but the method of Jesus is the oratorical, the personal. "Go ye as living men to

living men, and speak to them in their own language. You have been with me many years and have seen my methods, and ye know I never taught you a truth except through my own personality. I gave you the convictions, thoughts and ideas as they had taken possession of my heart and head. The truth came from the Father of all truth, but it came through me, and was expressed to you face to face and hand to hand." This is the true spirit of the first clause of the charter, and when the church has emphasized clearly the distinctive side of Christ's teaching, the preaching element, she has been most successful; and when she has departed from this method and resorted to the methods of the heathen priests—giving ritual for spirit, dogma for truth, tradition for inspiration, pious rites for integrity of life—that is giving to hungry men, as our Lord would say, in His energetic language, stones for bread and serpents for fish, she has failed.

The second part of the commission is also in keeping with our Lord's purpose to establish a preaching kingdom: "Lo, I am with you always." The same personal element, so necessary to effective eloquence, is to go with them. We have seen that the individualism of Jesus was intense. He was filled with the spirit of true manhood, and the divine fire of God. Every man and woman—good, bad, simple, and pure—felt the irresistible magnetism of His personality. It drew the weak toward the strong, turned the wicked toward the good, the doubting toward the faithful, the sinful toward the righteous. To come

into the presence of that marvelous Man was to love Him; there seemed to be an affinity between Him and all the creatures of the world. He was, in truth, the Bread of Life, and to eat of Him was to be filled. It was this individualism that made His preaching so impressive. How shall it be transmitted? By the oratorical method, the contact of soul with soul. But an objection may be raised—that no mortal man can have this individuality of Jesus. It is true that no man can present Jesus in the harmonious combination of His character, but there is something of the Christ in every man. The image of God in man is an infant Christ, and may grow into His wondrous personality. The more rays of divine light that image catches, the more truly does it reflect Christ. True individuality in man does not separate the human from the divine, but brings it nearer. There is a certain sense in which it may be said that the more truly human, the more truly divine. The highest human personality in man differs only in degree from the divine, and there can be no element of discordance. Unity of effort and consistency of purpose prevail in the higher regions of manhood; only in the lower animal man is there discord or divergence from the holiness of God. It is possible, as Christ said, that the spirit of His followers could be in Him and He in them, and yet His and their individuality remain undiminished. The more clearly and more earnestly the orator preaches Christ, the more truly does his own personality appear. This is true if we consider the nature of preaching. Accord-

ing to the Master, every preacher was a witness to Him. There are, therefore, two elements in every effort to spread the gospel—the truth, and the person who spreads the truth; that is, truth and personality. God might have written a revelation on the stars, or on the heavens, in some large book and flung it out to man to read and know His will, but He chose the oratorical method, as best fitted to develop man.

Every true preacher gives not only the truth of the Lord Jesus, but also a mysterious, subtle something, hard to define, yet ever present and wonderfully potent—his higher self. The true preacher who has come under the influence of Jesus does not speak to men, saying, “Here is truth—take it;” but, rather, “Behold how I am convinced, influenced, persuaded by the truth; how my heart throbs and brain fires in the presence of the Master’s spirit working in my spirit.” The gospel uttered by such a preacher has nothing about it that resembles the ordinary teacher or philosopher, anxious mainly to communicate facts to the intellect, but has the magnetism of life drawing life. Unless this principle is clearly understood and fully estimated, the true nature of preaching and the real influence of the church cannot be comprehended; for it is this method of presenting truth that separates Christianity from all other religions, and gives assurance that the kingdom of Christ shall not pass away—that the world will not outgrow the need of the preacher.

Preaching, which has this element of life in it, is in conformity with the great laws of the universe. It

is a law of animal life, that life begets life, and so truth touched with the life of the preacher begets life in the hearer. Christ more often spoke of life than of truth: "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life." The essence of Christianity is, that it is a new life. "Born again" is the expression; and how can life be imparted except through life? The mission of Christianity was to give a new pattern of life and conduct to the world and to persuade men to embrace this new life. Preaching seems to be the best instrument for that purpose, for it is life speaking to life. This high estimate of oratory indicates its necessity and its permanence as a civilizing force. There is an outcry at the present time, that the influence of preaching is becoming less, but this is rather because there is in some quarters but little true preaching. When the life element, the oratorical spirit, is absent from preaching it is likely to lose its influence. When the preacher imitates the philosopher or the schoolmaster, he may amuse, instruct and edify, and the people will value what he says according to its worth as knowledge or information; but if his pulpit loses influence or men say that they can acquire more accurate information on the topic at home from some book, he must not find fault or say that the preacher's occupation is gone. For he was a schoolmaster, not a preacher. He sought to give knowledge, not life. It is possible to do both, but the essential nature of the Christ-method is the impartation of life. It is possible that preaching is losing its hold upon men, yes, it is even now dying, but by and by you will see the whole world

run after a Whitfield, a Chalmers, a Massillon, a Bossuet or some Paul or Peter who has the true apostolic method.

No doubt the schoolmaster's function of preaching is on the decline, there is but little room for the "essay man" in the pulpit. But that was a function which the Master did not richly endow. He had nothing to say Himself about the order and system of the universe, nor about the philosophy of ideas, but had much to say about human conduct, life and destiny. He knew that all matters of a scientific nature would be duly considered by men and could be made to illustrate the principles of His kingdom, but His pulpit was to have something more influential to offer to a perishing world. If the object of preaching were merely to impart a knowledge of the great truths of Christianity, as some in our day think, then its mission might come to an end without much loss to the world, for the press, public library, and reading-club, are efficient instruments to spread knowledge. The huge volumes of theological literature that mould on the shelves of seminaries, contain the dogmas and facts of Christianity more elaborately expressed, than any pulpit orator in his half-hour sermon or more fashionable fifteen-minute sermonette can express them. But thanks be to its Great Founder, preaching has a higher function than to impart information. Its aim is to educate, to influence, to stimulate, to draw out, to impart new life and to build character. The highest function of preaching is persuasion, and in this spirit it is the most potent force in the universe

to make men more happy, more benevolent, more spiritual, more in love with God and man. It supplies spiritual food which cannot be obtained in any other way. Many loving, intelligent Christians derive their food mainly through the sermon. Preaching in its lower function of imparting information may grow less and less, but in its higher function of persuasion it will last unto the end of all things. There never can come an age in the history of human development when the influence of one earnest soul will fall powerless upon another. Theories and systems may change, but the great heart-forces which enable one man to influence another will never change. When oratory loses its influence, man will have lost his human qualities, and woful wreck will have come upon everything dear in the universe. As long as man has a heart and soul, mind and will, he will be moved by oratory. Sad indeed would be the world when human emotion and passion had passed away; when the maiden could no longer weep for her lover's fate or the mother for her child; when men could no longer burn with moral indignation at the sight of wrong and oppression, no longer thrill with the fire of independence or rise to heaven-exalted emotions of spiritual aspiration. Sad indeed that world would be, when human nature shall be so changed that poetry with its beatific pictures can roll no gorgeous sunset of ecstatic feeling before the imagination, and oratory, lit at the fire of universal manhood, falls powerless upon heart and mind. That would indeed be a sad condition of things, but it can never happen for all

that is sweet and enjoyable in human life, all that separates man from the animal, all that gives assurance of a future life, immortality, hope, love, fear, joy, must pass away, must be lost forever, before human nature can be so changed. And while human nature endures the orator's and poet's vocation will remain.

The Founder of the Christian pulpit has chosen an enduring weapon of warfare, for oratory will continue to be a great force in the world. If there is any decadence in the influence of preaching to-day, it is because the church is not loyal to her Master. May she not be relying too much upon the other instruments of conversion? Does she not, in a measure, by long services crowd out the spirit of preaching? It is certainly true that the world cannot be converted by sermonettes, nor characters built up by preachers who are only parsons. The preacher's function is a sublime and inspiring one and must not be sunk in the dust of contempt and neglect.

The necessity of good preaching exists to-day as strongly as it did in the days of the apostles. It is the distinctive feature of the Christian scheme for the regeneration of the world. It has won all the victories of the human soul; the preacher has generally been true to his Master, even when the dogmatic theologian has failed. Without preaching the church has always returned to heathenism, and has sold her birthright for a mess of miserable forms, weird incantations, or awe-inspiring ceremonies. The very heart and life of the church is preaching. Without it her thought and moral life will stagnate, and the living

water of truth crystallize. The sacred orator has kept the fires of intelligence and spirituality alive all through the dark ages of heathen domination over the church.

Like Elijah of old, who stood on the hill of superstition and rebuked with sarcastic words the men of Israel in the day when the church worship had degenerated into spectacular shows, and cried unto the living God, so the preacher and prophet has stood for Christ and rebuked the abominations which have sometimes been offered to men instead of life, conduct and morality. All the great movements born in the church for the spread of clearer and better views of Christ and His mission, all reforms in doctrine, moral life, and all missionary enterprises, have been started and brought to perfection by the preacher. Who will dare to say that our age is a model of civilization, and that there is no need for the preacher? Who will say that there are not places in our civilization as dark as those of Africa, where the sympathetic voice of God's preacher is not needed? The voice of the preacher, if it has the true sound and genuine emphasis of the Master, may be heard with profit all around the world. There is no man so rich, so poor, so despotic, so loving, so free, so enslaved to sin, but the preacher's voice can reach and can save. Only let the church of God hearken to the words of the greatest preacher of the apostolic age, as he describes, in vivid language, the work and true aim of the preacher:

“ And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets;

and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, even unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

This definition makes preaching something more than a barren encumbrance upon the ritual of the church, an obsolete function, to be done away with when ordinances are more perfect and doctrines more crystallized. It declares preaching to be the very life of the church, for the perfecting of the saints; for the work of the ministry; for the edifying of the body of Christ. How lofty the office of the preacher! His mission is not merely to state facts, but his main aim is to affect the very lives of men—to make even holy men more perfect—and to keep alive the body, or church, of Christ. Shall such a function decay? Can men ever become so holy that they do not need the earnest voice of the sacred orator? Then mark with what glory the last verse surrounds the mission of the preacher: "Till we all come unto a *perfect* man, unto the measure of the *stature* of the *fulness* of Christ." Nothing less than the perfection of manhood, that is the high office of sacred oratory. Soul must beat upon soul until each element in the human nature is made perfect. No visionary function is this of the preacher. It may reach in loftiness of its purpose into the heavens, but there is nothing cloudy about it—its object is thoroughly practical: the

regeneration of man; the building-up of man into the perfect stature of the Son of Man.

It may be asked how it is possible that preaching can effect so great a work? And the answer is: "The Master has taken the insignificant things of man to subdue the universe." Ask the barbarian how he will conquer the world, and he will reply, "By the sword;" ask the civilized philosopher how he will regenerate man, and he will say, "By knowledge;" but the Divine Master declares, "By soul power." The sacred orator utters truth that burns in every faculty of his heart and mind; and each flash of feeling—be it intellect, poetry, emotion, intelligence, or moral force—lights a corresponding feeling in the listener, and by perpetual awakening of the various spiritual and moral elements man comes at last under the influence of the Spirit of God, into the high stature of manhood, the fulness of Christ. Preaching, viewed in this light, is high above every ordinance of the church; nay, it is the chief force in the world. Every means, therefore, should be employed to make this force more efficient and more enduring. The best minds and hearts should enlist in the service of the kingdom of preaching, and the example of the Prince of Orators should be studied and followed as far as possible. The great love of the Master for human souls should burn in the hearts of His preachers, and the earnest cry should be on their lips: "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel of the kingdom." They should seek after souls as the fisherman watches the fish, or the shepherd the sheep

in danger, amid cloud and storm; always bearing in mind that they have a mission to a lost world more lofty and sublime in the heights of its love and reconciliation than all the mountains of the universe, and that the gospel they preach shall always be fresh and new; for the Master has richly provided for its life and growth by a most wonderful and enduring provision. Let those who think that the preacher's office is destined to pass away ponder the provision which Christ has made to perpetuate and continue forever the influence of the sacred orator. This provision is one which, at first consideration, would seem antagonistic and fatal to the life of the preaching kingdom, but when weighed carefully is found to be the strongest possible.

The imperfect and fragmentary way in which the teachings of Christ have been recorded, render it necessary that a different method from other teachers should be adopted in the propagation of His truths. We have no systematic collection of His sermons, speeches or sayings. If He had a system of theology is does not appear from the gospel narratives. There are no doubt the germs of dogmas and systems, but it is only by a stretch of human ingenuity, that the elaborate systems of Augustine or Calvin can be found in the simple sayings of the evangelists. The fragmentary condition of the sacred records have been a wondrous puzzle to many, and men of intelligence have been much troubled, and some have even lost their faith and pushed aside the gospels, as unworthy of inspiration, because of their fragmentary condition.

But regarded in the light of Christ's mission as an orator, and in the fact that from the beginning He had purposed to form a preaching kingdom, this condition of the sacred records instead of being opposed to their inspiration is a strong proof of their genuineness. If Christ had delivered systems of truth, and gave minute directions to write them down for all time, the preacher's occupation would be a minor affair, if not entirely unnecessary, and Jesus Himself might have taken rank with the philosophers or great teachers of the world, but would have lost His universal personality. His system of imparting truth would not have differed from that of the great teachers who had influenced men before His age, and the most wonderful movement in the world would have lost its distinctive and most inspiring character, namely, its oratorical method or the influencing of moral life by soul-contact.

There is a deep plan in the nature and condition of the truths of Jesus thus handed down to the ages. It is a proof of their divine utterance, since the revelation of spiritual truth thus imparted is by the same method by which all truth has come from God. Look at the stars as they revolve in unfathomable splendor in the heavens, and where is the eye that can detect a system of astronomy. There is a system but it does not appear in full glory; the mind of man studies the movements, arrangement and position of the stars, and makes a system to answer the wants and limitations of his nature. As the plough turns up the soil, or the earthquake breaks the mountains, or

the volcano sends forth the lava, or the sea recedes and reveals the ocean's strata, there is no system of geology painted in the rocks or printed on the sands, or beaten by the waves along the seashore. Only the fossils, and the tracery of forgotten vegetation, and the life-struggle of animals now departed, and the impressions of marine shells, and the clay skeletons of defunct birds and reptiles appear to man's observation, and are collected and classified, and man's intellect forms the systems of geology. So with every branch of knowledge, God gives the truths in wild, luxuriant growth, in alphabets of simplicity, and man's intellect unites and classifies and makes the system. Ought it to be otherwise in the domain of spiritual truth? Should God depart from His wise method in the natural world, and encourage spiritual sloth and idleness by giving a perfect and well-arranged system of spiritual truth? Is it not more in accordance with divine wisdom and foresight to scatter truth abundantly, like stars in the firmament or shells on the seashore, over the spiritual horizon, and let men gather, observe and classify them to meet the necessities of their own limited nature? Certainly that has been the method of divine revelation. The Son of God came upon the earth and uttered truth as the occasion and the need of men demanded, and these isolated truths are remembered and recorded by His hearers for future edification.

Such a process of imparting truth to men was well-fitted to make room for a kingdom of preaching. The short, condensed and irregular form in which His

truth appears, is well-adapted to suggest great trains of thought, and inspire the feelings of the soul. Every sentence of the Divine Book seems to be pregnant with matter for sermons, seems to contain a universe of truth. Upon these pregnant sayings of the Great Orator the preachers of His kingdom can build up discourses that will meet the earnest longings of the men of all nations; and if systems of theology are necessary, the theologian has not been slow to avail himself of the opportunity. That the sayings of Jesus have not shared the fate of the metaphysician and the scholar, left to moulder on the shelves of forgotten libraries, is partly because they were not arranged by Himself in philosophic manner and that preaching has lasted through the long ages and will last forever is due in a measure to the same reason. How long could ministers preach from Hegel, or Kant, or Spencer, and find hearers, or who would listen to a dry recital of their truths when their books, full of the glow of their master's style, are accessible? But mark the wisdom of Jesus. Knowing that He was about to establish a kingdom of expression, which should be a power to the end of the world, He spoke and acted in a manner to make that kingdom possible. There is a system of theology and a plan of redemption, but such can best be found in tracing the events of His life. Now this demands earnest work from the preacher and theologian, and as each will appropriate Christ according to his own stature as a man, there will therefore be diversity of thought, and such diversity leads to life. The preacher brings to bear his human

faculties upon the inspired sayings and the life of Christ, and derives his vivid pictures with which to feed men.

But the personal element appears more clearly in the provision made for interpreting truth as the ages grow in wisdom and intelligence. His preachers were counseled to take no thought beforehand what they should say. This was not a prohibition of due preparation, but a condemnation of the scholastic method, —the spirit-killing method of the rabbis of the day, who learned their speeches by rote. The ministers of Christ were to speak extempore, to give free access to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit who would teach them what to say. And so truly did Jesus seek the personal or oratorical method of presenting truth that He promised that the Holy Spirit would be with His preachers forever, and would not only bring to their remembrance whatsoever He taught them, but also guide them into all truth, reveal new truth and explain all mysteries, as the age and the condition of the world demanded. Such a provision is most glorious and far-seeing, for it saves at once the church and the preacher from becoming old and antiquated and their influence outgrown. The life of the church is thus assured. She must ever keep herself open to receive revelation, and the preacher need never be old in thought nor behind his age in spirit. His mind should ever be open to receive new truth, life and vigor from the ever-increasing inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

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